

COLLOQUE

Journal of the Irish Province of the
Congregation of the Mission

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Editorial

This edition of Colloque has been a long time coming. There have been momentous changes in All Hallows College and this has occupied a great deal of the editor's time. The strategic plan and mission statement for the College were launched by Fr Gregory Gay, Superior General, and his homily on that occasion is included here.

It has also been decided that, as Kevin Rafferty would say, 'for a number of reasons' from this out, Colloque will be published once a year. Normally, each edition contains one or more obituaries but those of Frs Tom Woods, Sean Johnson, Andy Spelman and Denis Collins will follow in later editions. What is included here is a 'roast' given by Jim McCormack on the occasion of Fr Eugene Sweeney's 90th birthday celebration in 2002. Eugene himself enjoyed it so much that he asked me that it would be published after his death; though, I think, more in tribute to Jim, the author, than to himself, the subject.

This edition is centred on the work that Michael McCullagh submitted for his MA in Management; Community and Voluntary Services in All Hallows and it traces developments in this Province over the years; it ties together many of our gatherings as a province and seeks threads and trends within our common experiences.

As 2012 was the year of the International Eucharistic Congress held in Dublin, I thought that the piece submitted by Tom Davitt was a worthy reminder of an earlier such Congress.

Pat Collins' piece on the New Evangelisation serves as a fitting marker for this Year of Faith. Finally, there is a very thought-provoking piece by Aidan McGing on Darwinism and, one might say, on the new 'mythologies'.

Mass at All Hallows College Dublin, Ireland

On the occasion
of the launch of
Aisling 2017,
the Strategic Plan for All Hallows College
18 November 2012

Rev G Gregory Gay CM, Superior General

Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

My Sisters and Brothers in Christ Jesus:

I am happy, indeed honored, to celebrate the Eucharist with you on the occasion of the promulgation of the new mission statement of All Hallows College. As the word ‘Eucharist’ is synonymous with ‘thanksgiving’, I think it is most appropriate we join to renew and rededicate ourselves by breaking open the Word of God and sharing in the body and blood of Christ. The mission of All Hallows - indeed the mission of every Christian believer – is grounded in what we celebrate this morning: “the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.” (Jn. 1:14)

All Hallows is now in its third century of en-fleshing the Word through the ministry of formation and education. Truly, reflecting on its past laurels could be reason enough to offer the Eucharist for this college, in thanksgiving for the generations of clergy and, now, laity who went forth from here to lead and serve in the way of Jesus Christ.

But as we approach the ‘ember days’ of Advent and the year’s end, we do so reminded that new beginnings are always possible with the God of Jesus Christ. The Paschal Mystery – the life, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus – always bids us remember that “*for God, all things are possible.*” (Mt.19:26) Indeed, the celebrations the last few days here at All Hallows speak to us of not only an institution, but a community that is renewing and re-committing itself to its Catholic origin and Vincentian charism. And for that we must all give thanks!

Today’s readings remind us of ends and beginnings made possible through the Christ-event. The Scriptures remind us that the reality of change, be it sudden or incremental, is a part of the matrix of life. The first reading, the apocalyptic literature of the book of Daniel tells us of a prophet who lived in a time of loss and devastation for the Israelites, and was sent to witness to them the presence and power of God , in spite of what occurred in their midst

The presence of evil and the suffering of the Israelites is not the last word. God's wisdom and justice are still present and guiding lights amidst a lost homeland and Temple. Daniel calls his people to be an example to others: "*Those who lead many to justice shall shine like the stars for eternity.*" (Dan 12:3) His message is clear: in every era, God calls people to be his prophetic presence in the world. The question is this, in that era or today; are we ready to respond in faith and trust in God as did Daniel? Are we a people willing to seek out God's wisdom and justice?

Mark's Gospel also reflects the tension between endings and beginnings. This passage occurs, just before Jesus enters into the 'earthly end' of his passion and death. His reminder of the end time is not meant to bring fear, but faith. As disciples of Jesus today, we unite ourselves to his Paschal Mystery. In our joys and sorrows, successes and failures, we make the life, death and resurrection of Jesus part of our lives. For the convinced Christian, nothing that happens in our lives and that of our neighbor is outside of the mercy and love of God as manifest in Jesus.

This Gospel tells us "he is near, standing at the gates." (Mk. 13:28) The question for us is: how open are the gates of my mind and heart to the person of Jesus? Do his words calling us to service of the poor and to practice justice resonate in my life? Do I allow the words and life of Jesus to inform my intellect and to transform my heart and will to be a disciple like St Vincent de Paul, who was filled with zeal for the Lord? As we end the liturgical year and the calendar year, we should reflect not on 'end-times' but how I deepen my discipleship in the coming year?

That is why the promulgation of a new mission statement for All Hallows is crucial both for this venerable institution, and especially for all members of this community; administration, faculty, staff and students. Your mission statement acknowledges four key core aspects of your identity in forming future leaders: you are *Catholic*; you are *Vincentian*; you promote *justice*; and you are people of *service*. In these core values, you find both your institutional history and your identity as a community. This statement calls you to know more, do more, and be more. This 'more' is the change when the mission evolves from words into truths of transformation.

St Vincent de Paul said, "*God asks first for the heart, then for the work.*" Your work as an educational institution is exciting, life-changing and benefits Church and society in Ireland. But the challenge will be to imbue in this community a willingness to explore and appropriate those four core elements of your mission into one's life. The great work of All Hallows lies in opening minds and hearts to a greater awareness of what it means to be Catholic, Vincentian, a promoter of justice and a servant leader in today's society. And it starts here, today, with you!

Your mission statement is a counter-cultural claim in a world often beholden to a self-centered and materialistic mind-set. Ireland, like much of today's world, is afflicted with the malaise of economic, political, and religious woes. This can create an apathetic atmosphere. But in the rich intellectual heritage of the Church, particularly, Catholic Social Doctrine and the Vincentian charism, you can "be the change" you teach, read, study and reflect upon at All Hallows. In doing so, you can become the next "generation of the vision" spoken of so beautifully in "*An Aisling*", the poem framing your briefing document and vision statement.

And so, as we celebrate this Eucharist, let me remember Jesus' promise to the disciples that "heaven and earth may pass away, but my words will not..." (Mk. 13:32) That is his blessed assurance to the disciples and to all of us that, despite all the tensions and tragedies of the world we live in today, in Jesus God is always seeking to bring hope and healing to a waiting world. Let us celebrate anew the mission of Jesus and Vincent so that All Hallows, this community of scholars and seekers, may truly become a 'wisdom community' that will "lead many to justice" as a beacon of light for Church and society in this great country of Ireland.

Policy-Making and its Implementation in relation to Leadership in the Anglo-Irish Province of the Congregation of the Mission 1986-1995

Michael McCullagh CM

This article was first presented in All Hallows College and submitted to Dublin City University 2011 as a documentary research paper in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Arts in Management: Community and Voluntary Services under the supervision of Dr Margaret Ó hÓgartaigh.

Introduction

In the foyer of St Vincent's College, Castleknock, there is a statue of Vincent de Paul by the French sculptor, Sarrez, depicting Vincent, with a gentle demeanour, leaning forward, with protective arms around two young pupils. On the base of the statue are the words: "St Vincent de Paul 1581-1660 Priest and Teacher."

Vincent de Paul, under the direction of Pierre de Bérulle, accepted a post as priest-tutor to the sons of the landed and noble de Gondi family, in Folleville, near Amiens, in the North of France, in late 1613. Had Vincent not accepted this appointment, it is most likely he would never have founded a congregation, become the model and champion of works of charity in the France of his day, nor the inspiration for generations of his followers up to the present time. Fortuitously, Madame de Gondi inspired and funded Vincent to begin a new community. Through her husband, Philippe Emmanuel de Gondi, General of the galley slaves in France, Vincent gained an entrée to the lives of ex-prisoners, serving their sentences in doomed Galley Ships, and committed himself to their welfare. Happenings like this are given, in hindsight, the simple name of "providence", especially within religious organizations.

The first Vincentians in Ireland began as a mobile mission unit but ended up with a variety of works, ministries and institutions. If the many and varied requests made of the congregation had not been accepted, what would have been lost and what would have been gained? It is a good time to take stock, to see if the shape and direction of the organization was destined, from the first beginnings in the Anglo-Irish region, to come more under the influence of providence rather than that of policy-making?

Policy-making and its implementation in the Anglo-Irish region of the world-wide Congregation 1986-1995

There seems to have been a recurring problem from the founding days with policy-making and its implementation in the Anglo-Irish region of the world-wide Vincentian organization. This can be seen quite clearly in relation to the formulated policies of the years, 1986-1995. (1) (Appendix One) To understand this underlying problem more clearly it is necessary to look at the founding principles of the Anglo-Irish Organization and what their specific goals were. Secondly, it will help to compare their goals with the founding principles of the original founder of the world-wide organization known as the Congregation of the Mission. (2) Thirdly, it will establish why the policies formulated by the international and regional leadership teams were never fully implemented – was it a problem with the Leadership teams in terms of executive power or was there a resistance among the members to accept and implement their policies?

To understand the basis of policy-making and its implementation it will be necessary to set down a number of tasks:

- To know the mind, policy-making and its implementation, of the foundational leader of the organization, Vincent de Paul;
- Gain an insight into the minds of the independent pioneer leaders of the Irish organization, what their principal aims were, and how they related to the foundational leader? (3) (Purcell, Mary 1963, 111-112);
- Demonstrate that the world-wide, and Irish Organizations responded fully to the call of Vatican Two to re-visit the mind of the original founder and re-write their constitutions; (4)
- Present the policies of the Irish Leadership team of 1986-1995 as a faithful response to the policies expected by the International leadership team and an assessment of how they were, or were not, implemented;
- Show that the call of the original founder, whether expressed in action or not, lies at the heart of the Organization.

Key Documents

The primary documents of the organization and the secondary material of those who made significant analyses and studies on the changes which occurred in religious organizations from the 1960s to the 1990s are examined in the course of the article. Four in-depth interviews are presented, two with the architects of the Provincial Plan, the material at the heart of the research, one with a former international leader and one with one who has been a member in a variety of educational and various other pastoral appointments over a period of fifty years. A random

survey was also conducted among those members who had access to email and the four aforementioned members who contributed to the in-depth interviews. What follows is a brief synopsis of the chapters.

Chapter One addresses immediately the problem of identity within the organization in Ireland, between those committed to educational works and those who wished a direct involvement with the neglected in society. In the 1960s two major events challenged religious organizations, one was a world movement involving civil rights, justice and equality for all and the other was the call by the Vatican council to return to the spirit and policies of their founders. The chapter looks at the person of Vincent de Paul and his policies. It then raises the question that if these policies were clear and precise why was there now a problem in the Irish organization with identity and with policy-making? It leads to the next chapter which was a survey of what some other writers have done in looking at similar themes.

Chapter Two is a literature review involving a number of writers who addressed the themes of identity and policy-making at a world-wide and at a local community level. The following emerge: First there are the themes of re-founding and change-management; Secondly, there is the tension between tradition and innovation; thirdly, there are the interrelationships between leaders and members at the time of policy-making, and finally a laissez-faire style leadership. The next chapter will examine the style of leadership and policies of the independent and innovative founders of the Irish organization.

Chapter Three is an account of the foundational leaders of an innovative institution which later affiliated with the international organization. It will examine the policy-making and the tensions among the members and ascertain whether it was by default or design that their policies led to the present status of the Irish region with its variety of works. However their legacy was not unique. Many religious organizations in the 1960's had to undergo renewal in the light of their traditions. It is the subject of chapter four and it will also form a back-drop for an in-depth analysis of the policy-making of the Irish Province in chapter five.

Chapter Four is an overall survey of policy-making and renewal in relation to leadership in religious organizations from the 1960's to 1990s. It was a choice between life and death, tradition and innovation. What emerges is the importance of transformational leadership, a key quality for change-management. In chapter five, leadership plays a key role in setting out goals and policies in a plan which was constructed over six years, from 1986 to 1992.

Chapter Five is an account of the critical moments in the development of the Provincial Plan of 1992. It traces the development from the publication of the international constitutions in 1984, the call by

the Irish leadership in 1984 for a radical re-orientation to people who are poor and the Convocation of 1989. (This is outlined fully in chapter five). The question will be addressed as to whether the policies were implemented then or later. Both the in-depth interviews and the random surveys will offer various opinions for the ultimate status of the plan in terms of its implementation.

The Conclusion revisits the stated outcomes in the introduction and whether these were realized. It ends with a series of tried and tested recommendations in relation to policy-making and its implementation, which would benefit a new start-up religious or similar organization today.

Chapter One

AN IDENTITY PROBLEM: A HOUSE DIVIDED

The Anglo-Irish Province of the Vincentian Organization has experienced an identity problem especially since being called to re-visit its founding principles by the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). This article will analyse the origins of this identity problem. Why is it that an organization, founded by Vincent de Paul in France in 1625 with one of its policies dedicated to serve people who were materially poor and destitute, had such difficulty in implementing that policy in its Anglo Irish region? It will also assess the many efforts which were made from the 1960s (5) to the present, to return to the founding principles at international and, regional meetings of the organization. In particular, the strategic plans of the Anglo-Irish region of the organization which were formulated in 1991 and revised in 1992 will be examined. (6)

There was clearly an inherent problem within the organization, as these policies were not implemented as the Leadership Team hoped they would. Was it a problem of leadership, line management or, simply, a resistance among the members to implement the policies? Hence the title: "*Policy-making and its implementation in relation to leadership in an Irish Religious Organization 1986-1995*". (7) At international and regional levels the majority of the documents seek to give expression to the principles of the founder, Vincent de Paul. This article will assess the founding attitudes and principles of those who set up the Irish region initially as an independent institute and which later affiliated with the international organization. In all the debates regarding the aims of the Organization this has seldom been alluded to as a possible explanation for the two schools of thought which have dominated the Irish organization since its foundation. Because of the differing founding principles

within the organization, policy-making and its implementation would always be difficult for leadership teams. (8) The foundation principles and attitudes of the initiators of the Irish region of this International Organization known as Vincentians will be examined in chapter three. (9) Meanwhile, there were other events and challenges which shaped the policy-making of religious organizations.

New Challenges to Policy-making

Religious organizations came under a number of influences in the 1960s and '70s which caused them to change their governance, their identity and ways of delivering their services. Politically, it was the time of the Civil Rights movements. New initiatives were being taken by lay groups to reach out to marginal groups in society in a new and radical manner. What was most distinctive about these groups was that the workers and volunteers were in solidarity with those they served, often times immersing themselves in their lives. No longer could the neglected of society be expected to face the daunting prospect of walking up long avenues. The new challenge was to walk down alley-ways and winding lanes find, serve, and often live among the marginal groups in their home places.

Another development which challenged religious organizations was the emergence of Basic Christian Communities in Latin America in the 1950s and '60s. (10) In such gatherings, the people oppressed by the landed classes realized that they had a power and energy within them to confront the injustices which beset them. (Gutierrez, 1984) (11) However, the greatest challenge continually offered to religious organizations was to return to the spirit of the founder.

A Challenge to return to the Spirit of the Founder

The greatest challenge to all religious communities came from the Second Vatican Council. (1962-1965). Sweeney (1994, 23-26) outlines the challenge offered to religious organizations. In *Perfectae Caritatis* (1965) (The Pursuit of Perfect Charity) the religious organizations were asked to return to the aim and spirit of the founders. They were also called to revise their constitutions after a consultation with each of their members. By the mid-1980s all religious organizations had, in various forms, a new set of constitutions calling them to a new identity, a simpler life-style and a service to people who were poor. (12)

In summary, all religious organizations returned to the founding principles and, in particular to the life and aims of their founders. The following section will examine the life and purpose of Vincent de Paul, the founder and leader of the international organization known as Vincentians. His leadership style, his policies and how he implemented

these policies will be assessed. In doing this, a template against which we can compare the policy-making and implementation in relation to leadership, in the Organization under review, will be presented.

Vincent de Paul, A Model for Others

Vincent de Paul was a man who modelled a way of life for others and, secondly, he inspired a shared vision by appealing to the compassion of others and encouraging them to act. Kouzes & Posner (2007, p. 339) (13) speak of these Leadership traits in greater detail. To these two traits one must add a trait important for all those who would wish to collaborate with others in achieving definite aims. This is the gift of uniting diverse minorities around a primary goal. (14) This was a gift that Vincent exemplified to great effect, especially in his dealings with his opponents.

The Importance of Choosing Good Leaders.

Vincent modelled the way for others in the example of his own life. Having opted for a life of ambition, he allowed himself to be converted through the circumstances of his own life. This was due, in part, to his choice of great leaders and his docility in following their advice. In his first parish assignment in Clichy, Paris in 1612 he was fulfilled and happy: “Mon Dieu! (My God) How happy you are to have such good people. The Pope himself is hardly as happy as a parish priest surrounded by kind-hearted people” (Purcell, 67). Yet, he still accepted the advice of to relinquish that parish after a year and go as private tutor to the De Gondi family who had a country castle in Folleville, near Amiens. (15) This acceptance by Vincent to leave the security of a parish and go as tutor to the two young sons of Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondi who was General of the Royal Gallies opened up to him countless opportunities to reach out to the most neglected citizens of the society of his time. In this life-changing option, Vincent gained access to the life of the Galley Slaves, many of whom were convicted prisoners, and later built hostels for them in the ports of France. (Purcell 1963). It was also while with the de Gondis that he gave his first parish mission and later, at the request of, and with the financial support of Madame de Gondi, wife of the afore-mentioned Philippe-Emmanuel, gathered a group of followers to do out-reach work among the poor country people of France. (16)

It is worth noting a number of other leadership traits in which Vincent modelled the way for others. First, he worked on his personal development, refining his irascible Gascon character, under the influence of Francis de Sales, who is attributed with the saying: “A spoonful of vinegar is better than a barrelful of vinegar.” Hence, Vincent learnt the gift of patience, and in turn, passed this on to his followers. In his

three thousand surviving letters, (17) he used the word, “douceur” (gentleness), four hundred times (Maloney 1998). Secondly, he was indefatigable, when confronted with new forms of poverty. In an article in *Colloque*, McCrohan, described Vincent as a minister of restlessness (*Colloque* 4, Spring 1981). So, up to his final days in 1660 he continued to explore new missions and new possibilities for serving those in greatest need, not only the Galley Slaves, but the street orphans, the victims of the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) and the Fronde, (1649-1652) (18) and, the captives held in North Africa as a result of sea-piracy (Purcell 1963). Finally, Vincent was a master planner and strategist. For every project there had to be a plan, outlined in great detail. Today, one can see on display, in Chatillon -Les-Dombes (now known as Chatillon-sur-Chalaronne) the detailed plan he wrote in August 1617 for the First Ladies of Charity group. (19)

In brief, therefore, we have come to meet a leader, working at his own perfection, allowing himself to be guided by trusted leaders but always restless to address new forms of poverty, in strategic ways. For those who look to the founder, who wish to look for policies for the organization, the message is clear. Vincent is looking for people of good character who will never rest while surrounded by poverty of any kind, people who will work in a systematic way for systemic change. However, Vincent knew he could never achieve his mission while working in isolation. It had to be a shared mission and for this to happen, he had first to share his vision with others.

Vincent as the Leader who inspired a Shared Vision

From his first days in Chatillon-Les-Dombes, it is obvious that Vincent was a natural collaborator. Having heard of the plight of a poor family on a Sunday morning he preached an appeal to his congregation. However, to his surprise, and dismay, so many were moved by his words, and responded immediately to his appeal, that the destitute family were overwhelmed by the generosity of the parishioners. So, his first effort at sharing his vision was to gather a group of ladies together and write up clear directions as to how the poor ought to be cared for (20) (Román, 1999, 123-124). He continued this practice of sharing his vision in enlisting the help of women of rank and nobility in Paris, people such as Madame Goussault who was the first president of the Ladies of Charity in Paris. (21) In 1625, he met a widow, Louise de Marillac, became her spiritual director but recognized also, her organizational and executive skills. In sharing his vision with her of serving the most destitute, he set in place, charitable organizations in many parishes and districts throughout France. (Román, 1999). Having seen the limitations of the Ladies of Charity who had begun to send their servants to the poor of

Paris and other districts Vincent sought to set up a permanent caring system. So, with Louise de Marillac, he established, in 1633, a new radical organization, later known as the Daughters of Charity. For them the streets of the city were to be their cloister: "Because whoever says *religious* means *cloistered* and Daughters of Charity have to be able to go anywhere." (Conference of Vincent, cited in Román 1999 p.456). These Daughters of Charity whom Vincent saw as having the freedom to go anywhere, he invited to work alongside his own mission priests whom he had already established as an institute in 1625.

While Vincent de Paul had the gift of sharing his vision with others, for serving the neediest in society, his greatest gift was his ability to work with difference, that ability, to gather around him people from diverse backgrounds and culture. Many of these were hostile to him but Vincent kept his focus always on the primary goal of serving the most abandoned in society. The following section will look at some of these diverse groups with whom he also shared his mission and who, in turn, collaborated in his mission.

Working with Diverse Groups around a Primary Goal

One of the great challenges to face Vincent was in the sufferings imposed by Richelieu on the two uncles of his collaborator and confidante, Louise de Marillac. Uncles, Michel, and Louis had supported Marie de Medici, mother to Louis XIII then seriously ill, in her efforts to curb the influence of Richelieu on the State. (22) However, Richelieu regained the King's favour on the latter's temporary recovery and so, Michel de Marillac was imprisoned and his brother, Louis, beheaded. What is significant in all of this is, that while Richelieu described the executed Louis as "a vain and audacious man" (Purcell p. 128), Vincent was writing words of consolation to their grieving niece, Louise de Marillac. Yet, through all this injustice, Vincent refrained from condemning Richelieu, thus displaying his political acumen. Vincent needed Richelieu, and he needed his collaboration for his many charitable projects. Had Vincent taken umbrage at the stance of Richelieu it is certain that he could not have enjoyed the support of Richelieu's niece, Marie, Marquise of Combolet whom her uncle later accorded the title, the Duchesse d'Aguillon. Here Vincent shows the way for those who wish to combine politics with social action. If the primary aim is to serve the neglected then one must also employ political means to that end. In this instance the neglected were the beneficiaries. Later, the Duchesse provided the money for a hospital for the Galley Slaves in Marseilles. (23)

There is one other episode in the life of Vincent, which further highlights his gift to collaborate with those who opposed him. Having seen

the plight of three hundred homeless people in Macón, he engaged a process which is now better known as social analysis and drew up a strategic plan to deal with their plight (Román, 143-145 & Purcell, 146-147). Once he analysed their plight, he organized a fixed covenanted tithe from people of means in the town, thus providing accommodation, food, medicine, and the services of a doctor for what was to become a self-sustaining project. He achieved all this planning in three weeks. Years later, in 1635, Vincent referred back to the event in a confidential letter to his close collaborator, Louise de Marillac. "When I started the charity at Macón, everybody laughed at me and pointed at me in the street, but when the work was finally accomplished they all shed tears of joy."(24)

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter began with the statement of a house divided, with a problem of identity, finding it difficult to concentrate on clear foundational principles. Later it examined the aim and spirit of the Founder, as all religious organizations had been asked to do, and encountered a man, Vincent de Paul, single-minded in his aim of always serving the most neglected in society, a minister of restlessness, who modelled a way of life for his followers whom he inspired with his vision. Vincent was a man who, in sharing that vision, enabled others to act in collaboration with him and this included, even his opponents, some of the most powerful people in the political life of France of the seventeenth century.

In 1992 the vision and aims of Vincent de Paul were given expression in the Provincial plan of the Anglo-Irish region of the Organization. Later the question will be addressed as to whether these documents were clear, challenging and sufficient, in themselves, to call the followers of Vincent de Paul to live out his vision and aims in the closing decades of the twentieth century? Before that, it is necessary to reassess the founders of the Anglo-Irish organization. They were closer, in terms of history, to the founder, Vincent de Paul. Did they imbibe his spirit and aims fully? Were they ministers of restlessness, with only one vision to serve the most abandoned in society in a manner in which he served them? A study of this early group, and how closely they allied themselves with Vincent, may provide a key to understanding the underlying identity problem experienced by later generations of the organization in Ireland. Later, in chapter three, the aims and policies of these Irish founders, will be examined, their motivations of coming together, their vision and mission and what eventually they left their followers as a legacy. (25) The article will also assess, to what extent those who set up the Irish organization as an independent institution, imbibed

the teaching, the vision, policies and strategies of the original founder. It will provide a key to understanding the struggles the organization experienced later in policy-making and its implementation.

Towards a Literature Review

However, before assessing the Irish founders, it is necessary to look at the writings and research of others, in relation to the topic of policy-making and its implementation in other religious organizations. In the literature review which follows, authors will be presented, who have analysed their own, and other religious organizations. Their work will provide evidence of change-management and how the agents of change attempted to devise and implement policies, which were in line with the universal call to renewal. Some of these key authors, their works and insights will be examined in the following chapter.

Chapter Two

LITERATURE REVIEW

A Problem of Identity

Chapter one presented the problem of identity which became acute in the 1960s in the Anglo-Irish Province of the Vincentians, with the call of Vatican Two for all religious organizations to enter a process of renewal. The first step in the process of renewal was to re-visit the founder of the organization. What were the guiding mechanisms for re-imaging the founder? Which portrait was adopted of Vincent de Paul? In the abstract he is mentioned as a priest and teacher. Was he more than that? How he is presented is important because that portrait or image influences the policy-making. The second step in the process of renewal was the formulation of a new set of Constitutions for the organization which would reflect the mind and policies of the founder. In chapter five, the final steps in the process of renewal will be examined, as the organization in the Anglo-Irish region determined its own policies, in keeping with those of the constitutions. At each stage of the process there was a problem of identity. Hence, without a sense of unanimity in regard to identity, how could there be agreement in relation to policy-making? In this chapter a general scan will be made of literature relevant to the origins, leadership and policy-making of the organization from its beginning.

A Presentation of Relevant Literature

When presenting the life of Vincent de Paul, the primary literature source is the collection of his letters, 3,000 of which have survived of an estimated 30,000. (26) The second primary source from Vincent will be what he wrote for his own members called *The Common Rules* (27) while the third primary source is the Constitutions which were presented in 1984. These constitutions present the thinking of the world-wide organization, and endeavour to remain faithful to the founding policies of the Common Rules. The other corpus of literature contains the countless biographies of Vincent, the majority of which are in French. Among these, Purcell's (1963) is considered by many of the scholars as the best English biography. (28)

However, in terms of the larger landscape of the changes in religious life from the 60s to the 70s one has to take account of the work of Arbuckle, Maloney and O'Donnell. (29) As people who lived through the transition period following the Council of Vatican Two, they realized that congregations faced a choice between life and death. Hence the challenge was to re-found, and to find leaders who would oversee change-management. Their work will be central to understanding the religious organization under review in terms of how, if at all, it renewed itself through its policy-making and its leaders. (30) These are authors who interpret, through a new set of concepts and language, religious organizations and change in the context of the present culture. In their writings and presentations they are also able to discern in a new language the mind of the founder for the present culture. (31)

In attempting to find a key to the identity problem one has also to re-visit the founders of the Anglo-Irish region of the world-wide organization. Here, a central and crucial piece of primary source literature is the personal account of one of the founders, Thomas McNamara who wrote his reminiscences in 1867, thirty four years after the founding date of 1833. (32) From this source, new insights emerge. Five church people had already attempted to found a branch of the International organization and link it with the central government of the international organization. However the actual founders of the new institute were reluctant to submit immediately to a foreign authority. The link eventually happened almost by default. (33)

One invaluable insight which McNamara presents almost unwittingly, making at least four references to it in his account, is his use of the word, "providence" a concept which always had great significance in the life of Vincent de Paul. It is a way of seeing seemingly contradictory happenings and disappointments within a wider context, and trusting that better outcomes will ensue. Perhaps it is McNamara's code word for explaining how a duality of policies emerged from a group who

initially banded together with one single purpose, namely, an outreach formation programme for a people on the margins of life? In modern business terminology “providence” may be regarded as “laissez-faire leadership” (Literally, “let do or let it happen”). In the course of this research it will be interesting to note whether the Irish founders lacked the single-minded policy-making of Vincent de Paul and allowed themselves to be influenced towards the aims, policies and expressed needs of other more powerful voices? This laissez-faire disposition had repercussions up to, and including the policy-making event of the Provincial Plan of the Irish region in 1992. This key primary source document will be examined in chapter five.

Two other sources in particular will be used, Sweeney (1989) and Guy and Hurley (1990). The former surveys his own community within the general call to renewal and also the internal struggles which that entailed during a time of innovation and policy-making. Guy and Hurley take a more objective view of the changes which did or did not happen within communities, and from their research, offer reasons why this may have been so. The following section will evaluate the literature chosen.

A Brief Evaluation of the Literature Employed

The literature chosen will give new insights into the source of the problem of policy-making and its implementation in relation to leadership, particularly the primary source material, the writings of Vincent de Paul, the Constitutions, the account of McNamara and the actual Provincial Plan. While there is little ambiguity in the writings of Vincent de Paul in regards to his policies in the Common Rules (1658) McNamara in his account speaks of a community waiting for the opportunity to realize its initial object. (Colloque, 1983, Spring) (34) Following on the theme of the laissez-faire approach, McNamara omits to name exactly what that object was.

The next significant primary source material is *The Provincial Plan* of 1992. This was a systematic attempt to re-capture the spirit of the initial founder of the organization and to give full expression to the new Constitutions of the organization which were finalized in 1984. The plan expressed this hope: “Our hope with this Plan is to re-vitalize our Vincentian life and mission.” (35) Authors referred to in the previous paragraph all come from a modern perspective, Sweeney (1994) critiquing his own community while being an active member within it, Murphy (n.d.) highlighting the divisions within the region but also the contribution of a Vincentian education in an Irish context. O'Donnell was the one who enriched the Vincentian Convocation of 1989. Maloney (1998), as international leader, continually called the

organization back to the original mission of Vincent de Paul to reach out in a new way to the most abandoned, to collaboration and community. Finally, the literature of Guy and Hurley (1990) is invaluable in analysing why policy-making in any religious organization does not necessarily imply policy-assent.

The Merits and Demerits of the Literature chosen

Briefly, the merits and demerits of the literature chosen will be examined.

1. The Writings of Vincent de Paul (1985). These are authentic and in them we meet the real Vincent, a man who is single-minded in regard to his policies. The disadvantages are that Vincent cannot create a new history. He cannot speak from beyond the grave into a new culture where systemic change is required. (However there is evidence that Vincent, did in fact, address structural injustice but that is study for another time and place.)
2. Purcell (1963): The merit of Purcell is that she presents Vincent as humane and compassionate, who has the gift of loving the oppressed and indeed, the oppressor, with the same love.
3. Maloney (1998) and O'Donnell (Convocation of 1989): Both Maloney and O'Donnell are familiar with the heart and spirit of Vincent. Maloney speaks of the "gentleness" of Vincent while O'Donnell highlights his self-awareness
4. The Account of McNamara on the Origins of the Congregation in Ireland (1867): The advantage of this piece of primary source literature is that it is the first document written on the founders. The shortcomings are that it is one-sided, that it is written thirty four years after the founding date by an older mellow man, and, finally, that he does not specify unambiguously what the objectives of the founders were.
5. Murphy (n.d) Murphy traces the evolving differences between the two key founders, Dowley, and McNamara (36) in terms of their policies, and, their relationships with the central leadership of the organization in Paris, leading eventually to McNamara having to relinquish his post as leader.
6. The Provincial Plan (1992): This policy-making document reflects fully the directives of the Constitutions of 1984 and lays out targets which are measurable. The shortcomings of the document, in hindsight, are that there was no built-in guarantee that the document would be managed or implemented by future leadership teams. Neither was there any indication of the level of ownership of the plan within the membership of the organization. (37)
7. Sweeney (1994): This piece of literature is a thorough critique

of the challenges to change which all religious organizations received in the 1960s. Secondly, it presents the struggles of one religious organization between tradition and innovation. Its limitation, in terms of this research is that it describes an ethos and lifestyle different from the one under review here. Its struggle was different, namely, that effort to move away from monasticism to contemplation, and a realization that one can be a contemplative in a world of action. Yet, it provides the clearest perspective of the internal struggles involved in change-management within a religious organization.

8. Guy and Hurley (1990): Guy and Hurley highlight the value of taking an objective view of the organization. It is a way of getting behind the scenes. It looks at the inter-relationships between leaders and members, and the attitudes of each, in terms of being fulfilled in their organizations. Their study leads one to question so many assumptions in religious communities, such as the very simple one, already mentioned: policy-making does not imply policy assent. Their research is based on a survey of religious organizations similar to the one under review in this research and is therefore, a valuable and relevant piece of literature.

Chapter Conclusion

Chapter one began with a house divided and returned to a time of unity of purpose and policy under the one charismatic founder and leader, Vincent de Paul. This present chapter comprising a literature review looked at authors who either gave an account of, or an analysis, of their own, or other religious organizations. Their insights will be employed to interpret and understand how policies either emerged or were constructed, and if, and how, they were implemented. . For example, in the light of the literature reviewed, the question will be asked whether a laissez-faire-type of leadership, which yielded and responded to the needs of the time as they emerged, dictated the policies of the foundational leaders in Ireland. These were young men, who founded an institute with the primary aim of engaging in the formation of a newly emerging people and culture of the 1830s in Ireland. In other words, was it policy-making by default or design? It is one of the key questions for the following chapter.

Chapter Three

THE FOUNDATIONAL POLICY-MAKERS IN THE ANGLO-IRISH PROVINCE

Towards a new Interpretation

In chapter One, Vincent de Paul was presented as the charismatic leader and founder of the organization, one with a clear vision and who remained leader for his life-time. Having spent thirty three years living the rules, he finally published them in 1658, only two years prior to his death. (338) His was a three-fold policy. First, was to serve the most abandoned in society; second, to reach out to the people in the poor country-side of France, and third, to form others who would do this work adequately. However, having a three-fold policy may have caused problems for later generations of leaders in the organization. (39)

In the last chapter, authors were cited who gave insights into how religious organizations constructed their policies, how policy-making caused internal struggles, and, the reasons given for the non-implementation of policies. In this chapter, the type of foundational leadership in the Anglo-Irish region of the organization will be examined with the purpose of shedding light on subsequent divisions in relation to works. (40) Were they too independent of the central organization based in Paris? How cohesive a group were they? Was there one clear visionary leader after the manner of Vincent de Paul? Secondly, their policies will be reviewed. How close were they to the original policies? Did the social, cultural and religious circumstances in the Ireland of the time, determine the type of policies they adopted? Were these policies as clear and unambiguous as the policies of Vincent de Paul? Were they the best policies that could be adopted at the time in the light of the prevalent and pressing needs of the nineteenth century in Ireland? Finally, how successfully were the adopted policies implemented? In the following section the composition and character of the founding leadership team will be examined.

The Founder-Leaders of the early Irish Anglo-Irish Region of the Organization

In Ireland, the organization began as an independent grouping of young seminarians from the newly-founded National Seminary, Maynooth College in 1795, who wished to found a community of men willing to do outreach-work to a people, following the Catholic Relief Act of 1829. (41) Only later did this group ally itself with the central organization which had its headquarters in France. This had the effect of the founding principles not being passed on directly to the new branch of the organization. (42)

The guiding principles and practices of the independent organization in Ireland and later incorporated within the wider organization will now be analysed. These guiding principles and practices influenced the origins of the Irish Organization in such a way, that, in later years, it never could recover nor, implement fully, the principles of its original founder.

There are a number of problems associated with the Leader-founders of the Irish organization. (43) First, the leaders did not come under the direct influence of the central leadership of the Organization until six years after they were founded, when they visited Paris in 1839. (44) Secondly, none of them knew Edward Ferris, the Irish Vincentian sent from Paris as the first Dean in Maynooth from 1801-1809. (45) Thirdly, they were not single-minded in their aims as was Vincent de Paul, who sent missionaries to Ireland in Cromwellian times and to the Highlands of Scotland during the same era with the one purpose of caring for the most neglected and the victims of persecution. (46)

A Different type of Leadership

The founders of the Anglo-Irish region were different from Vincent de Paul in a variety of ways. First, they were seminarians (47) in what was known as the Royal College of St Patrick when they saw a need to establish a new organization to meet a felt need. (48) Secondly, they belonged generally to the middle classes. Thirdly, there was no one charismatic leader among them. Fourthly, they were leaders who were responding to a different felt-need to that of Vincent de Paul. These young idealistic men were responding to a spiritual poverty in Ireland of the 1830's and so found a mobile team to present a uniform teaching coming from the council of Trent. (49) The diversity of the founding group and the culture and circumstance of their founding determined the policies they adopted. These will be examined in the following section.

Policy-making and the original Leaders

The original Leaders had parish missions as a primary aim. However financial circumstances determined that they first establish a school as a means of an initial income to the group. (50) It was a further nine years before the group gave their first parish mission. (Keogh and McDonnell, 2011, 29). (51) The tension between the call to conduct parish missions and the support of the newly established school had a determining influence on the later divergence within the group as to its primary aim and policy-making. (52) A series of other circumstances had a bearing on the aims and policies of the group. Under medical advice they were encouraged to move to the country, to Castleknock, which was then outside the city boundaries. (53) In addition, Archbishop Murray asked

that Castleknock would now become the ecclesiastical seminary for Dublin diocese (Murphy n.d. p.7). The early founders could easily find justification in accepting this request from the Archbishop. It was one of the works of Vincent de Paul and secondly, Vincent encouraged his followers to respond positively to the requests of the local bishop.

Already we see how the leaders were reactive rather than proactive in their style of leadership. Murphy comments on this when he describes the transition from an organization which had as its first aim, the giving of parish missions and ending up with a commitment to running a school. "It (the organization) had set out to give parish missions but had departed from that." Speaking of the college, which began as an ecclesiastical college, he said: "Soon it was an exclusively lay college and McNamara its most severe critic." (Murphy, .11). In retrospect, one has to have certain sympathy for these young inexperienced founders of a new organization in a country under the influence of a different culture and religion for centuries. (54) In the following section it will become evident that these young founders were not totally free to adopt their own preferred policies or those of the parent organization. (55)

The Hidden Leaders

A number of factors determined that the original founders did not have the freedom that Vincent de Paul had in forming the parent organization. First, they were only recently diocesan students and therefore subject to their diocesan bishops. Secondly, when they became full members of the international organization following their first visit to Paris in 1839, they would have learnt, that the Lazarists or Vincentians were, by definition, secular by nature. They were no longer diocesan, but secular priests living in community. This, in itself, kept them close to the diocesan priesthood and the diocesan structure. Thirdly, they would have learnt, after being fully incorporated into the international organization that respect and obedience to the local bishop was of paramount importance. Vincent de Paul, when possible, tried to respond to the requests of the local bishop. Hence it is understandable, that regardless of the founding principles of Vincent de Paul, these men would respond to the needs of society as outlined by the Bishops. However, Dowley, did express his reservation to the Superior General in 1844, when he feared three of his members would be called as Bishops for India. He felt he had the support of his Archbishop in this instance:

"The Archbishop, with his fatherly care for us, with his ever constant and tender goodness, agrees completely and decisively with me that this attempt would be the ruin of the burgeoning family of St. Vincent in Ireland." (56)

Another hypothesis is worth considering in relation to the conflict

in leadership between the two founders, the young McNamara and the older, wiser, Dowley. While McNamara could focus on new horizons and the one aim of parish missions, Dowley as former Dean, knew the value of formation and of education.

Dowley attended the Synod of Thurles and heard there how the Vincentians were commended for their work on parish missions (Murphy, 27). Murphy continues: "Founded by Murray, the Vincentians were thus to become Cullen's 'most trusted helpers and advisers'. (57) Later, in 1854 Cullen advised John Henry Newman to "consult Rev Mr MacNamara (sic) and Mr Dowley on all practical matters as they are intimately acquainted with the state of public feeling in Ireland?" (58) (Appendix Eight). From this privileged position with the Bishops, a position which their predecessor, Vincent de Paul held, albeit with more autonomy, it was inevitable that the founding-leaders in Ireland felt an obligation to respond to the call of the Bishops to establish educational facilities, from all levels from primary to third level. In fact, the Synod of Thurles debated, in particular, both primary and third level provisions. (59)

A Case of Two Strong Minds

Nevertheless, while both men were aware of the call of the Bishops, both pursued different aims, McNamara favouring parish missions and general pastoral work and Dowley favouring education. While the original founders left Maynooth with the express policy of forming a mobile mission team, educational works continued to develop and expand. The question is, was this by default or by design? In fact it was both. As mentioned previously a small school was set up in Usher's Quay, Dublin, primarily as a means of financial support. It was health factors which led them to a country house on the edge of the Phoenix Park in Dublin. Initially it was an ecclesiastical seminary which was a preparatory step to entry to a major seminary. The first change came when Archbishop Murray opened his own seminary without consulting the personnel in St Vincent's College. The founders of St Vincent's were now left with a school building and some lay students. By the 1870's with the establishment of a separate independent seminary for Vincentian seminarians in Blackrock (1873) the college became an exclusively lay school and those running it, completely committed to it. Its object now was, as Murphy (.46) records, to educate 'Christian gentlemen'. However, as aforementioned, there had to be a certain amount of "design" in the development of Educational works.

An Educational Policy

While the early founders never set out to found educational establishments many of them later subscribed to what is known as the “rising tide theory” – if the elite are educated, they, in turn, will enrich the lives of others. A report by the Leader of the Organization in 1904 emphasised this very point: “In educating those towards the top of the social pyramid those lower down could only benefit.” (Murphy, 47) (60) In the 1970’s this ‘rising tide’ theory was still used as a measure of success. In part Two of Murphy’s *Nos Autem*, profiles are drawn of past pupils who made an enormous contribution to Public Life, to Medicine, Scholarship and Education, The Arts, Enterprise and Business and Law. (Murphy, 157-299). One of these, AJ Hederman, President of the then Union, past pupil, former Supreme Court Judge and Attorney General, asked the question and then offered an answer. “If we received such a remarkable education, why have we not revitalized every institution in which we have lived and worked? We are proud to know of a few who have done just that but, for the most part, we have jogged along trying to live what we have received as best we can.” (Murphy, xiii)

There was one policy which was clearly taken and that was the adoption of a new motto for the college. The original one was ‘Caritas Christi Urget Nos’ (‘the love of Christ impels us or, leaves us no option’). However, in 1886, with the introduction of the *Castleknock College Chronicle* (the first college journal in Ireland) a new motto was introduced, and which remains to this day: *Nos Autem in Nomine Domini*. (We, however, (trust) in the name of the Lord). (61)

Following the founding of St Vincent’s College, Castleknock, the organization was given the administration of a number of colleges, all at the request of the local bishops: beginning with The Irish College, Paris, 1858; St Patrick’s diocesan minor seminary, Armagh, 1861; St Patrick’s Teacher Training College, Drumcondra, Dublin, 1883; All Hallows Missionary College, 1892; St Mary’s Teacher Training College in Hammersmith in London (later, St Mary’s, Strawberry Hill and now a constituent of The University of Surrey) 1899. They also ran Ullathorne Grammar school in Coventry, later to become the first Catholic Comprehensive School in Britain. The last foundation was St Paul’s College, Raheny, founded in 1950 at the request of Archbishop John C McQuaid. The value of the Seminaries, Teacher Training Colleges and other schools was seldom in question. The colleges were seen as places of adult formation in line with the vision of Vincent de Paul.

A Legacy of Division?

In 1861, there was an acrimonious assembly of the Leaders of the organization, with a clear division between the policies of two key

leaders, MacNamara and Dowley, with the former favouring the work of parish missions and the latter works of education. (62) In the 60's a similar division emerged in the Irish Province. James Cahalan, a restless leader, after the manner of Vincent de Paul, in his first year as leader in 1966, offered the following reflections:

“It is very important that any work in which the community is engaged should have a definite Vincentian flavour about it and that it should be seen to have it. Vincent was the apostle of the underprivileged at all levels, and so we his sons, must clearly have constantly in our minds this class in our society. St Vincent made his contribution not only by direct contact but also by the indirect contact of educating others to their social responsibilities.”(63)

Cahalan was setting out a new policy. (64) To be Vincentian is to serve the poor in a direct way after the manner of Vincent de Paul. This is to be a preferential choice. Then he mentions, as if of secondary value, the idea of indirect contact, a veiled reference to the “rising-tide” aforementioned theory. By the 1970s and ‘80s the same struggles and divisions of the 1860s emerged but this time the college lost its independent self-regulating status in terms of development and policy. By the 1980s Murphy (138) would say that: “the drift of power from the college authorities to the council was complete.” (65)

Chapter Conclusion

While Vincent de Paul put down strong foundations for his organization in terms of his vision, aims and policies the same cannot be said for the Irish region of the organization. True, the founders were solid and committed people and the foundations they laid were solid but perhaps they were for two different types of buildings. They may not have been in competition or overshadowed each other in any way, but at times they did deprive each other of some light. This trend continued up to the mid-1990s when all the edifices, both educationally and those pastoral services in direct contact with the neglected of society, were reduced in scale. (66) Yet, the call for direct work with some of the neediest in society was continually answered. These were works with the Homeless in London and Dublin; centres for Deaf people in Ireland and Britain, works with Refugees and Asylum seekers, centres for Justice in Dublin and London which operated at national level, (Appendix Three), work with the Travelling Community at a pastoral care level in the greater Dublin area, and an overseas project which welcomes volunteers from secondary level to post-retirement level. (Note Appendices Five and Seven, and the variety of works engaged in by the members).

If there had been only one visionary foundational leader in the Irish region either for education or the work of mission, as it was called, which one, in retrospect, could one choose? If only the primary policy of giving parish missions had been adopted, they would have had to diversify into new works, as parish missions no longer operate in the same way as heretofore. (67) However when a dual policy emerged in the early days of the organization, either by default or design, it gave rise to so many works of education which have continued to renew and adapt to changing circumstances up until today. (68) It also gave rise to a variety of works of direct service with people on the margins of life.

Finally, this chapter set itself the task of looking at the foundational leaders and their policies. What has emerged is that they set out to work as a team who would deliver on formation programmes for a people experiencing new religious freedoms. Circumstances dictated many of their decisions in adopting certain works. They also responded to the requests of their local bishops. Hence, in the end, “providence” or their *laissez faire* style of leadership led to a variety of works, both educationally and in direct service of some of the more neglected in society. It is the legacy which was bequeathed to their present-day successors in the organization. However they were not unique. All other religious organizations faced similar struggles in attempting to adapt and change. How change, adaptation and subsequent policy-making occurred in other religious organizations will be the subject matter of the following chapter.

Chapter Four

POLICY-MAKING IN RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS FROM VATICAN TWO TO CONTEMPORARY TIMES

A Process of Renewal

In this chapter, a brief overview of the processes of renewal within congregations in general, will be presented, prior to examining in chapter five, how the Anglo-Irish Province of the Vincentians arrived at their provincial plan policies, following the publication of their constitutions in 1984. Gerard Arbuckle (1986), (69) James Sweeny (1994), (70) Mary Guy (1990), (71) Andrée Fries (72) and Hugh O’Donnell (73) are the principal authors whose words, work, and research will be employed. The following themes, common to most congregations will now be examined: The identity crisis and the call to renewal, re-founding challenges, phases in policy-making, the Role of Leadership in change-management in religious congregations, transformational leadership and, finally, policy-making and implementation.

The Identity Crisis and the Call to Renewal

In the 1960s all religious congregations were challenged to re-define themselves in the light of Vatican Two. It was a call to look at the founders and the founding principles. However, they found that the founders, time-bound as they were in their foundation cultures, could not give rise to a new history. For example, Vincent de Paul founded his congregation to work among poor country people whereas the poor were now, in the present age, in the cities and urban areas. Sweeney, speaking of his founder, Paul of the Cross, dealt with the difficulty of transporting a time-conditioned message to a new culture when he described him as: "a historical figure speaking to the present, of the past, rather than the immediate originator of Passionist life as lived in the present." (Sweeney, 1994, 78). Hence, it became the era of charismatic leaders, who could read the signs of the times and find a new role and message relevant to a new culture. The choice was stark, between life and death, between innovation and extinction. Arbuckle, (1986, 24) spoke of the call to re-vitalization. Whatever route was chosen would generate tension. There would be those who felt that fidelity was remaining true to tradition, and others, who responded to the call for a radical renewal. O'Donnell (1989) used a life-giving and oft-quoted phrase in addressing the Irish congregation at a critical Convocation: "something, someone is dying... something, someone is coming alive; I am coming alive. (74) Sweeney defined the tension in the renewal process as that between charism and entropy. Charism, is simply a gift, usually in relation to religious congregations, that creative gift to see a need and to respond to it constructively. Entropy, he describes as "the tendency to systemic disintegration, to a loss of collective confidence and energy, and to disorder." (Sweeney, 1994, 107) Yet, systemic disintegration in the sense of a refusal to accept new challenges did not happen, as the congregations concentrated on finding a new identity. It was rather a call and a challenge to the re-founding concept.

Re-founding challenges

The re-founding process focused on identity. Sweeney (1994) speaks of the challenge facing his congregation which by the 1960s had become monastic in character. (75) So, what identity would the congregations assume in a world where they had lost their key roles in education, health and social services as these were being taken up by state agencies? What identity could they recreate in a world where there was a "decrease in their external legitimacy?" (76) All congregations were encouraged to re-visit the lives of their founders. However, this often gave rise to tensions between those who wished to follow the original radical founding principles and those who remained loyal to the

traditional expressions of the congregation as they evolved over time. It was a challenge for the leadership to keep both sides in harmony.

At Assemblies, tensions often arose between those who sought creative ways of being of one mind with their founders as they interpreted them, and those who opted for the security of tradition. Sweeney articulates it as follows: While creative people can give rise to new histories, they can, he said: “also polarise organizations and, most important of all, they can fall prey to absolutism, asserting their way as the only way” (Sweeney 1984, 122). Yet somehow, the two groups, which exist in many congregations often need each other, as they define who they are, and what they do, in relation to their given roles within their congregations. The religious leaders had to respond to the challenge of making new and agreed policies which would satisfy and engage both strong and often opposing camps, within a congregation.

Phases in Policy-Making

One process employed by many religious organizations leading to the finalization of their Constitutions and Statutes in the 1980s was the formulation of charism and mission statements. (Appendix One) Guy & Hurley (1990) did an analysis of this process, and while many members of congregations were positive, others, those mostly under fifty, were negative. Leaders tended to be more positive than non-leaders. Generally the statements were found to be “insufficiently specific; emphases, rather than clear statements of purpose, that could be evaluated” (Guy & Hurley, p.88-89). Most congregations followed a similar pattern of following gospel values, having a concern for the poor, addressing justice issues, social needs and community living. They also found in their research that while many mission statements emphasize concern for the marginalized the aspirations of those who wish to work with them are never realized. This would indicate a lack of a total buy-in by the Leadership team in the guiding principle of the statement. If a mission statement is specific then it can be used as a measuring device to critique all works of a congregation.

The next phase in policy-making in congregations tended to focus on justice issues and ministry to the most neglected in society. This ran in parallel to the calls of the church (Justice document of the Synod of 1971) (77) and to the ‘reverse mission’ which entailed bringing back the good news from what were initially, mission lands. Many congregations gave rise to minor prophets, people who spoke out against injustices such as homelessness, those in captivity to a drug culture and those in the developing world facing oppressive regimes. (78) Other congregations set up justice commissions within their own communities. For all of these changes to happen, leaders, in effect, were overseeing

change-management at a rapid pace. Leadership was indeed central to the re-vitalization and sustainability of the congregations as will be presented in the following section.

The Role of Leadership in Change-Management in Religious Congregations

Arbuckle speaks of the leader as a change-agent, a person who:

- has a vision of what the world should be;
- Is able to translate this vision into clear goals, objectives and strategies;
- Is able then to draw others to accept the same goals and objectives, strategies and consequent behaviour patterns.

In the business world, Arbuckle sees the change-agent as the “entrepreneur” while the one who makes innovative ventures and changes from within is called the “intrapreneur” (sic) (1986, 43 & 44). Hence, the leader must be one who is innovative and creative, a prophetic person, who can view the world and ask “what if?” Later we will see how founders like Vincent de Paul had the strength of character to implement a vision regardless of obstacles. Arbuckle says that leaders as re-founders or “intrapreneurs” have a more difficult task: “Their task, at times, can be more daunting than that undertaken by the original founding persons” (Arbuckle 1986 p.63). Oftentimes the leader has to make the difficult decisions like closing one favoured and traditional work in favour of an innovative project. To achieve this, the extent of the membership, and its availability for new works, must be assessed. Here Arbuckle quotes Drucker: “in turbulent times the enterprise has to be kept lean and muscular, capable of taking strain but capable of moving fast and availing itself of opportunity.” (1986, 92). (79) Finally, the leader working with a team is always interested in re-vitalization, innovation and transformational action for the organization. In fact, the leader is the one in the transformational role, a role which will be examined in the following section.

Transformational Leadership

Already, Arbuckle (1986) mentioned that the task facing re-founders was greater than that of the original founders. The task of transformation is more difficult than the initial task of founding. It is more challenging for a leader to be an agent of change within an existing congregation than outside of it. Transformation is difficult for many reasons, but not least, because of the resistance leaders will face from the members. Often this is not overt, and Guy and Hurley (1990) highlight the fact that one can never know the mood or the true dispositions of an organization without applying a body of knowledge known as organizational

development: “a planned programme of change which is organization wide; managed from the top; aimed at increasing organizational effectiveness and health.” (Beckhard, 1980, cited in Guy and Hurley 1990). (80) Using this process, they discovered through surveying six congregations, three of women and three of men that one needs a specific set of questions on all aspects of policy-making within an organization to discover the true attitudes of the members both towards the policy-making process and change-management. For example, organizational development reveals a great discrepancy between superiors and non-superiors in a congregation. Superiors tend to have their needs met and find fulfilment within the congregation whereas it is not always the same for non-superiors. Superiors still exert the greatest influence on policy-making and its implementation whereas those under fifty feel, once more, that they exert little influence. Women were more open to change and to employing outside change-agents. Hence, many congregations, who have already gone through agreed charism and mission statements, and indeed many other policy changes, may not have had a high percentage buy-in. The process of organizational development reveals a mental reservation and even a passive resistance to change.

Policy-Making and Implementation

Finally, Fries (1995) describes transformative leadership as being critical to the re-vitalization of religious congregations. Guy and Hurley spoke of a two-tier level of existence where nominal assent to a proposition or policy did not always imply a buy-in and Fries (1986) also alludes to the fact that members can adopt survival techniques when they do not buy into new policies. In modern terminology, it is what one actively brings to the table that is important. Lonergan, as cited by Maloney (1998) speaks of four key moments in which a community bonds, and embarks together as one, on the same path. They are common experience, common understanding, common judgement and common action. (81) All religious congregations share a common experience, a common history and ethos within it. In relation to common understanding Maloney uses the apt phrase: “when we *say* the same things we *mean* the same things” (Maloney, 1998, 144-145.) When it comes to common judgement, one commits to assimilating the basic shared teachings of the organization. Finally, a community must act together on the judgements it has made. The outcome from these insights into the dispositions of members within religious organizations is that leadership must consider communications with all the members as central and, where possible, have a process of determining the mood and the attitudes and dispositions of the members, towards ownership and action, in relation to policies.

Chapter Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter on policy-making in religious congregations, examined, first the identity crisis which faced all congregations following Vatican Two, the choice of accepting death or the innovative road to life. Secondly, there were the re-founding challenges of bringing two groups together, those who choose to remain faithful to the evolved traditions of the community and those who sought creative and innovative ways to give expression to the original vision of the founder. Thirdly, there was the role of leadership in change management where that role was seen as more daunting than the role of the original founder of the congregation. It was also a role which valued a high level of communication between leadership and members so that there would be more than a notional buy-in to the agreed policies. In the next chapter these three challenges are faced by the Irish organization, the choice between tradition and innovation, the challenge of keeping two distinct groups engaged in the policy-making and, finally, the challenge of change-management facing the leadership teams.

*Chapter Five**AN ERA OF POLICY-MAKING IN THE ANGLO-IRISH PROVINCE 1986-1995**A Call to Policy-Making*

Earlier it was seen how a house divided, in which there was an underlying tension, often came to the fore, particularly at assemblies and gatherings of the organization. To understand the origin and basis of this tension it was necessary to re-visit the founding leaders in Ireland, to look at their vision and aims to examine if these were in accord with the aims of the original founder, Vincent de Paul. It was also noted how the International and regional Irish leaders took seriously their responsibilities to reclaim the mind of Vincent de Paul, his vision and aims and how these found expression in a new set of directives in the form of the Constitutions of the world-wide Congregation. (82) Having looked at the vision of Vincent, his policies and his executive style of implementing them, in collaboration with a diverse group of co-workers, the question had to be asked as to why the Irish region of the Organization had struggled to implement them? Chapter three examined the discontinuity with the parent organization.

This following chapter examines the legacy of a restless Vincent de Paul tugging at the sleeves of the international and regional leadership teams and calling them back to the foundational policies. (83) It will also look at new policies in line with the founding vision and how these

were arrived at. The first stirring towards this came in the Irish region as a result of a Provincial Assembly of January, 1978.

A Radical Re-Orientation to the Poor (84)

The Provincial Assembly, January 1978, made the following proposal: “to examine steps necessary to ensure community involvement with the poor, with a view to securing a radical re-orientation in this direction.” (85) This proposal was a definitive statement towards re-visiting the mind of Vincent de Paul. A special commission was set up which interviewed a wide variety of people with various levels of pastoral experience in the Anglo-Irish region. First, they acknowledged that circumstances had changed since the time of Vincent de Paul. The greatest concentration of poverty was now in urban rather than in rural areas. Secondly, the community development model was advocated where the disempowered became subjects in their own empowerment and transformation. In summary these were the recommendations of the commission:

- That new recruits would be sourced from different cultural and social backgrounds thus influencing the nature of the works of the organization in the future
- That students experience life among deprived communities
- That members pursue new areas of study to meet the needs of people in challenging circumstances
- That the members would live a simpler life-style
- That the work of the organization be concentrated in less affluent areas
- That an alternative form of education be provided for the socially deprived.

The commission ended by saying that a document, in itself, cannot compel change but did offer a challenging question for each member to ask himself: “Is there in my life, as there was in St Vincent’s, any bias towards the poor?”

This call to the commission shows a change in the attitude of the leadership of the organization. It was a most explicit call to a “radical reorientation” to persons who were neglected. It may not have shown immediate results but in the following years there were a number of new works taken on which would indicate a change of direction, such as a new mission team, a ministry with the Travelling People, an immersion programme in a deprived urban area, a volunteer programme for young adults and greater collaboration with other similar agencies.

However the greatest radical changes came at the international level of the organization. After seventeen years and three General Assemblies the central government of the organization issued a new set of constitu-

tions for the entire organization in 1984. (86) These constitutions were an unambiguous declaration of a preferential option for the people for whom Vincent de Paul originally made *his* preferred option. The key policies of these constitutions will be examined in the following section.

The Constitutions of 1984

New policies were outlined in a new and revised constitution, which were in line with the thinking of Vincent de Paul. Vincent had three foundational policies:

1. The members had to be upright people who would commit themselves to acting with integrity.
2. They were to reach out and serve people who were on the margins of life.
3. They were to form other people who would equally be people of integrity and who would work in an ethical manner. (87)

In the new constitution these foundational rules are still to the fore, though slightly changed. The members are still required to be people of integrity who act uprightly at all times. However the people on the margins of life are now referred to as “the more abandoned.” (88) The next major change is that they would also form others whose primary task was to serve the marginalized.

Finally, the Constitutions of 1984 spell out clearly in language suitable to the time, the following objectives which would influence the choice of projects undertaken:

- There was to be a “clear and expressed preference” for those projects which would engage people who were poor.
- Attention was to be given to the factors which cause inequalities in the distribution of the world’s goods amongst peoples.
- The members were asked to have “some sharing in the condition of the poor,” so that the members could be influenced by their values
- The members were also asked to be in solidarity with one another in having a common and shared purpose in their projects.
- They were also asked to be mobile and ready to go wherever the needs were greatest.

It was these clearly stated objectives of the 1984 Constitution which influenced the plan of 1992 for the Irish region of the organisation. (89)

The Provincial Plan (90)

In 1991 the Leadership team launched their first draft of a strategic plan, which they called: *Provincial Plan for Ireland and Britain, 1991-2000*. The genesis, purpose, goals and implications of the plan, the background documents which inspired it, and, the intentions of those who

wrote will be examined in the following section. It was the culmination of a series of strategic steps which began with the charism statement in 1981. (Appendix One).

The Purpose of the plan

The purpose in drawing up a plan, according to the Provincial Leadership Team, was to facilitate a greater co-operation and collaboration among the members. However, the plan would only succeed according to the degree of ownership it would receive from the membership of the organization. The leadership team acknowledged that the members would have to give assent to it and work for its implementation. This thesis will later assess the level of that assent and how, if any of the plan was implemented.

The Goals of the Plan

In the 1991 plan the goals were set out clearly

- A. Outreach to the most-abandoned.
- B. Team Building
- C. Personal on-going development

The first goal, which is *An Outreach to the Most-Abandoned*, with nine specific targets, will now be examined.

Goal A: An Outreach to the Most Abandoned

The Leadership team set out some basic principles to underpin this first goal.

- The urban poor are to be the target group for the Organization's projects
- Closer relationships must be built with non-organisation members and with other organisations involved in similar projects.
- A new awareness has to be developed of new thinking, in terms of justice and peace issues and social analysis.
- Members of the organization will be expected to immerse themselves in the culture of those among whom they work, especially those on the margins of life.
- An awareness of adult learning, and its importance, needs to be inculcated in the members, so that they can more effectively communicate with their target audiences.
- By engagement and involvement with young people the organization hopes to expand its membership base.

Having set out these guidelines the Plan then outlines targets and lines of action to be adopted under each of the three goals. The targets chosen under the goal: *An Outreach to the most-abandoned*, have been

chosen precisely because they can be quantifiable or measurable in terms of whether they were later implemented or not. Each target is spelt out in precise and practical detail, under the headings of why, how, who, where and when. From a management point of view it calls for accountability and is quantifiable. The first target will now be presented.

Target One: Outreach teams

Outreach teams to develop strategies of empowerment and development to peoples in urban centres in Britain and Ireland.

Unlike the founding times of the organization, people who suffer poverty are now primarily in urban centres. An outreach team would work with those from the Third Level Colleges and members of the Leadership team to work on outreach policies based on a basic social analysis of the conditions of people who find themselves under the poverty line.

Target Two: Educational Centres

To co-ordinate and deploy the resources of the colleges of the Organisation in the education of outreach workers

The organization ran four centres which focussed on formation (91) and the expertise of those would be used in the further education of outreach workers.

Target Three: The Local Community

to become the locus of effective services

Designated members of the Organization would work at grass roots level in the empowerment of individuals and communities.

This would consist of adult learning programmes in self-development and adult educational programmes, such as AVEC, (92) personal development and Leadership. New people would be trained to take on leadership roles in the local communities. This was proposed as an immediate priority.

Target Four: An Outreach to Pastoral Leaders of local communities

Since the time of Vincent de Paul, this is one of the key works of the organization, namely the training and support of pastoral workers. (93) Towards this end it was proposed to set up a centre for training and this was to be implemented by a special committee nominated by the Provincial Leader and appointed in autumn, 1992.

Target Five: Presence among People who Live on the Margins of Life.

This was a call in response to the Lines of Action of 1989 which stated that members would have the experience of living among people on

the margins and those, in turn, would influence the collective thinking of the organization. (94) This kind of thinking is emphasised by those who wish to value the primacy of the experiences of people who are dis-empowered. (95) (Hellwig, 1982) When Pope John Paul addressed members of the Organization he also urged them as follows: “Without waiting further, live closer to the poor”. (96)

Target Six: Specialized outreach teams.

A target was set for the organization to consolidate its works to the disadvantaged in society, as it is part of the tradition of the organization.

- This would be achieved as follows:
- Maintain commitment to Travellers and to the Deaf (97)
- By training new people to work in these specialized tasks.
- By involving others outside the organization in these tasks.
- By evaluating the present collaboration with all associated with these works.

Target Seven: Collaboration with other affiliated members of the Organization

It was proposed to establish joint projects for people on the margins, such as the Deaf, Travellers and other outreach activities. This was due to happen in Spring, 1991. One of the success stories as a result of this was the establishment of the joint justice offices in Dublin and London which came from a collaborated effort between the Vincentian, the Daughters of Charity, the Holy Faith community, and the Vincent de Paul society. (Note Appendix Three)

Target Eight: Education

The purpose of this target was to conscientise (sic) the young in schools and colleges regarding the plight of those on the margins, or those unjustly treated. Four major colleges would be targeted, St Patrick’s College of Education, St Mary’s, Strawberry Hill (University of Surrey); Castleknock and St Paul’s second-level colleges.

Target Nine: To Develop Programmes for Young Adults

A goal was proposed to set up training programmes for young people in collaboration with other like-minded agencies so that young people would do outreach work with marginal groups. To this end it was proposed to develop Youth Volunteer Programmes in Ireland and Britain lasting one year.

Goal B: The Team Building Process

Many of the modern theories of management were to be employed in team building, such as open communications, regular team meetings, informal team-building exercises, continuous reviews of work practices, and, structures to be put in place to support work practices. Within this team-building process team members have to take personal responsibility for up-skilling themselves. The situation has to be avoided where the CEO or managers of each group are the only people with ultimate responsibility for all that happens in the organization. This was new thinking at the time as up until then most work practices operated along the traditional hierarchical lines.

As stated at the beginning the plan for the Organisation had three major goals, the first was an action plan to reach out to others, the second concentrated on team-building and the final goal centred on the personal development of the members. This following section will examine the main elements of the proposed personal development.

Goal C: Personal on-going Development of Members.

Each member of the organisation has a personal responsibility to develop intellectually, psychologically and socially and be equipped to meet the changing needs and challenges of the market place. A key element in personal development is based on continuous self-analysis and evaluation. The plan sets six targets for personal on-going development which are as follows:

Reflection-action-reflection. This is based on the pastoral cycle in social analysis as presented by Holland and Henriot (1983) whereby the members of the organisation continually engage in pastoral reflection and evaluation of their actions.

Up-skilling of members through a variety of courses. In regard to this, justice is emphasised as a definite study option

Local leaders in the organisation to take courses in leadership and collaborative skills.

The Implications of the Plan and its impact on future strategies

In 1992 the central committee who drew up the plan were aware of the implications of the plan. Since the personnel of the organisation would diminish it was envisaged that they would work in the future in more collaborative ventures. Each new project would have to be evaluated in the light of the plan. The primary task of reaching out to those on the margins will be used as a criterion in assessing and determining the projects the organisation will engage with in the future. The plan will also require a broader vision, creativity, imagination and a new model of

working whereby people outside the organisation can work as constituent members within it.

The implementation of the plan presented a challenge. First, there was always that hidden legacy of division from the early founding days which was addressed in chapter three. Secondly, tiredness had come into the organization. With the median age rising and with the rapid decrease in personnel, (98) people no longer had the energy to engage the prophetic voice. There was a desire for unity which had been a core value of the organization since the beginning, the call to live, as Vincent de Paul requested, "after the manner of dear friends." (99) People had grown weary of conflict and indeed, had come to fear it. (Lencioni, 2002) (100)

Implementation of Plan and Conclusions

In conclusion, it is surprising how many of the targets were, in fact implemented, perhaps not immediately, but certainly in later years. In addition to documentary evidence for this, there will also be references to two in-depth interviews, with the only two surviving architects of the 1992 plan. (101) The leadership, in formulating the plan, stated that it would only succeed according to the degree of ownership it would receive from the membership of the organization. The members would have to give "assent to it and enthusiastically share in its implementation." (102) Borrowing the Newman concepts of notional assent and real assent, and adapting them for his own purposes, Sweeney spoke of members often giving "notional" assent whereby "real" (implied here is "committed") assent is needed. (Sweeney, 1994, 128) Guy and Hurley (1990), already mentioned in chapter two in the literature review, also spoke of this dubious assent to policies where people accept the definition but fail to take the concrete practical steps of policy implementation. Reflecting on a later Assembly, a Provincial leader acknowledged the difficulties of implementation when he said: "Looking back now, I can see there was no follow through on this." (Rafferty, 2009, 238) (103)

Those who constructed the plan believe it was not implemented because it was not managed, owned or, that the underlying policies were not fully communicated. (104) There was also a discontinuity from one leadership team to the next and the team of 1995 embarked on a new plan. (105) There was also another reason beyond the responsibility of the 1986-1995 leadership teams and that was the decrease in personnel, the numbers who had left the organization and the closing of the houses. When the plan was constructed there were four centres of formation in which the organization held considerable influence. Within eight years, by the year 2,000, the organization had direct involvement in only one of these. (106) Yet many of the policies of the Provincial Plan were still

implemented in later years, as will be seen in the next paragraph.

There was one other reason why the policies were not fully implemented and that is because of the diverse nature of the membership. There is evidence in a random survey that the majority of the members joined the organization primarily because they wanted to become members. (Appendix Seven) It was not a mission-focused decision. Many used the phrase: "I was attracted by the life-style". Neither did the majority of those who joined know that the organization had a special charism for, or mission to serve the most abandoned. The new recruits were mostly attracted to the community life. However, the table also reveals a great willingness on member's part to accept whatever work was offered to them and hence, within a life-time, a member could have had as many as four distinct appointments or ministries. What is also remarkable is the variety of works available, especially in relation to the most abandoned in society.

It is now time to see how effectively the policies of the 1992 plan in relation to particular goals were implemented. First, in relation to Goal A, which was *An Outreach to the Most Abandoned* the following outcomes were realized, often not immediately, but within the ten years following the composition of the Provincial Plan. They were as follows:

- A. Centres for Justice and Peace were established in Ireland and Britain which address root causes of poverty. (Appendix Three).
- B. There was collaboration with many agencies in the work with Travelling People, the Mission team and work with young adults, including Vincentian volunteers who worked on home needs in Ireland and Britain. All of this early investment in young adult work later resulted in the present group of Vincentian Lay Missionaries. (In 2010 both members of the Deaf and Travelling communities worked in collaboration with the Vincentian Lay Missionaries in Ethiopia)
- C. Adult learning was promoted in All Hallows College and people who had missed out on educational opportunities in life were facilitated in taking undergraduate and post graduate studies. (107) All Hallows college also took its formation programme, called *Pathways*, "on the road" to various centres north and south in Ireland and in England.
- D. Some members responded to the call to take up residence within the world of the more neglected in society.
- E. The plan also set as a target that the pupils in educational formation would experience the plight of those on the margins of life. This too has happened, though not immediately, with the overseas immersion programme for teachers and pupils. (108)

- F. The Call to serve the urban poor was only partially implemented with a new parish in Glasgow and a new presence in Belfast. (For personnel see Appendix Two)

While there may have been a slow pace of implementation, the fact that the works of the Travellers, Parish Missions, the Deaf ministry and the second level schools were endorsed as key works meant that good outcomes eventually came.

In the next section, an overall view of more general insights, recommendations and conclusions arrived at, will be examined.

Conclusion

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

A House United Around Diverse Policies

This article has looked at *Policy-making and its Implementation in an Irish Religious Organization 1986-1995*. It opened with the reality of division due to two policies often in opposition, especially at times of Assemblies and other policy-making occasions. The policies can be divided roughly between those who believed the primary call was to serve the poor and those who believed the primary call was the formation through educational means of the leaders of tomorrow's world. Often there was contentious debate in regard to the ultimate aims of the organization, with each side taking an ideological or absolutist stance as to the merits of its own particular work or ministry. Yet, it was an organization that never divided in an acrimonious manner, with one group acting independently of the other. It maintained its cohesion due to a strong charisma for community life which found full expression in its agreed charter statement. (Appendix One) It was observed how the Anglo-Irish organization evolved as an independent unit with policies influenced by the international organization. In the introduction a number of outcomes were outlined. These, together with the information they generated, will now be presented.

Desired Outcomes and Findings

1. *To gain an insight into the minds of the pioneer leaders and founders of the Irish organization and what their principal policies were?*

There were clearly two schools of thought, one which wished to take up the call to follow Vincent de Paul in the work of parish missions and the other which was a response to the call of the local bishops to develop educational apostolates. (The formation of people for ministry ran as an independent and parallel work and was always valued as a work close to the mind of the original founder, Vincent de Paul). In answer

to the question posed, whether the policies adopted were by design or default, the results point to the latter. It was by a series of circumstances that education became a core-policy which led to a small organization having responsibility for key educational establishments at second and third level in Ireland and Britain.

Yet, the policies of the founder-leaders of the Anglo-Irish region also led, in later years, to mission houses being established in Ireland, Britain and Australia and latterly in Nigeria and Kenya. (The work continues with a mission team appropriately named The Ember Team.) Works of formation of youth and adults continues up to the present while specialized works with the homeless, Travelling People, Immigrants and the Deaf community have also been part of the works of the organization

In conclusion, it was also observed that the foundational leaders were of one heart and mind after the manner of Vincent de Paul. This, they left as a legacy to their successors. So, despite a difference in policy-making they succeeded in remaining as they had set out to do, a community in mission to serve others. So, the title of this section, a house divided around diverse policies is still borne out in the practices of the organization today. The next outcome will now be examined.

2. *Demonstrate that the world-wide and Irish organizations responded fully to the call of Vatican Two to re-visit the mind of the original founder and re-write their constitutions.*

In relation to this outcome which involves re-visiting the vision of the founder, Vincent de Paul, the following conclusions emerge:

- a) He was both a systemic and systematic agent of change. It may not always have been obvious that he engaged in addressing structural injustice. However, on closer examination he is seen as the one who structured his charities and his war relief projects. Policies were put in place which guaranteed sustainability. So, in the constitutions the mind of Vincent is reflected in the words, that the members were to seek out the root causes of poverty.
- b) From a study of the life of Vincent it also emerged that his conversion came while almoner to the Queen, and in his immersion in the life of the poor. Hence, once more, in the Constitutions the members are asked to have some immersion in the lives of the most neglected.
- c) Once Vincent saw a need he galvanised all help necessary to meet that need, especially in collaboration with others. Hence, in studying the life of the founder the congregation has learnt how to unite others, even those of different beliefs and ideologies, around the primary goal, which is service of the abandoned.

3. *Show that the call of the original founder, whether expressed in action or not, lies at the heart of the organization.*

The modern-day followers of Vincent de Paul are equally restless in the face of injustice as they re-visit his charisma. (C1) Already, many of the members of the new organizations wish to be immersed in his charisma and ethos. Perhaps they, like the original founders of the Anglo-Irish region who started independently, without the embers from the original fire, are also starting a new fire?

Recommendations

Having looked at the policy-making and its implementation in relation to leadership in an Irish religious organization the following recommendations are offered to any similar group already in existence, or commencing in the present culture.

1. Have one clear policy in place with supplementary policies, only if necessary, and as a support to the primary policy.
2. When members are interviewed for the organization they must subscribe to the policy of the organization and its primary work.
3. All initial and subsequent works are critiqued in the light of the primary policy.
4. The primary policy is to be re-visited on a yearly basis.
5. An action plan must accompany the strategic plans of the organization.
6. A change-agent or facilitator must be available to all communities of the organization and not just the leadership.
7. When a leadership team presents a new plan it must be mandated by the members to be implemented even if there is a change in the leadership team.(In other words, policy-making must not be radically altered with each new incoming team.)
8. All works which involve a team are to take preference over individual private-practice works.
9. Charism and mission statements are to be reviewed and critiqued every six years in the light of the founding charism and mission of the organization.
10. Specialized voluntary commissions to be put in place comprising members and non-members of the organization with the task of policy-making on specialized issues like justice, works with the most abandoned and with young adults.
11. Have a line-management structure in place.
12. Finally, have a road-mapping policy in place from the beginning, envisaging a day when the members of the religious organization diminish and their work has to be taken over by lay people.

A Personal Reflection

The initial focus for the topic under review in this article was the Provincial Plan of 1992. It was an innovative plan with radical proposals that were faithful to the founder and which took many members by surprise. Since then, there was a sense among the leadership team who constructed the policies, that they were never owned, managed or implemented. This article set out to find possible reasons for this. The surprising element, which was again a revelation, was that the problem with the implementation of policies could be traced back to the foundational leaders in the Irish region. Another invaluable personal insight was that many of the inherited policies came by both design and default (the trade-word for the latter in the organization is “providence”, a topic that was already addressed.)

The search for understanding continues. It will entail re-visiting the authentic words of the founder and the struggles of the young Irish founders between their own aspirations and the needs of their people as they perceived them. Meanwhile the image of the restless Vincent de Paul still calls the membership to be restless in the presence of injustice of any kind. There is a Vincentian way of serving the most abandoned. It is a rich legacy and it leaves its members no option.

*Appendix One**Charism Statements 1981*

- We Vincentians are called to experience the gentle, compassionate love of Christ in community and to share this love with those to whom we are sent. (Ireland)
- We Vincentians are called are called to live together as brothers in a simple and humble way in order to bring the love, healing and compassion of Christ by action and word, in a simple way, particularly to the needy and vulnerable. (Britain)
- We Vincentians are called by Christ to a simple evangelical life in community so that we ourselves may be effective ministers of Christ’s compassion for the poor, and may form others for a similar ministry. (Nigeria)

The Mission Statement 1985

The Vincentian mission is to follow Christ, the Evangelizer of the poor. To do this effectively we live a simple evangelical life in community. Following the example of St Vincent we respond to the call of the church by concentrating especially on:

- The ministry of preaching missions/retreats in the way best fitted today for the renewal of parishes and other Christian communities,
- forming the clergy and laity in church ministry,
- catechizing and forming catechizers, drawing on our Province's tradition in the forming of teachers and in other educational apostolates.

In carrying out our mission and ministries in a spirit of compassion, gentleness and reverence for the individual we will pay particular attention to:

- The marginalized,
- The alienated from society,
- Those indifferent to the Church,
- And the victims of injustice and poverty.

Appendix Two

PERSONNEL 2011

AGE	TOTAL
40-49	2
50-59	7
60-69	9
70-79	23
80-89	14
90-99	3

Appendix Three

Policies leading to the Development of the Justice Office

Policies and Steps which led to the Setting up of Justice Offices in Dublin and London.

1979: A Commission set up by the Provincial Leadership entitled: A Radical Reorientation towards the poor.

1988: first Justice and Peace Summer School sponsored by the Province, in All Hallows.

1988: Autumn lectures on: Public Injustice – Vincentian response.

1989: Convocation in Clongowes: Proposal: "To establish an appropriate structure in each region of the province to deal with issues of Justice and Peace."

- 1989: An advisory group set up to examine how this action could be progressed.
- 1990: May 21st. Letter from the Provincial establishing a Justice and Peace Commission for the Irish region.
- The key terms of reference were as follows:
1. To conscientise the Province on Justice and Peace issues.
 2. To network with other Justice and Peace groups, especially the CMRS Justice and Peace desk.
 3. To collaborate with the Daughters of Charity and the St Vincent de Paul Society with a view to establishing a common Vincentian voice on issues of Justice and Peace.
- 1990: A Justice and Peace Summer School was conducted in All Hallows with presenters from Catholic Peace Action, London and from the Women's peace camp in Greenham Common.
- 1991: Justice and Peace Summer School: On a Vincentian Family way of doing Justice.
- 1992: Justice and Peace Summer School: Vincentian theology of Justice and Peace with input from a Liberation Theology perspective with John Prager CM as speaker.
- 1992: First steps towards a Joint commission of Justice and Peace.
- 1993: A Workshop on Unemployment with Vincentian family. A Vincentian Justice and Peace Office proposed.
- 1996: Justice Office established.

Policies and Steps towards a Justice Office in the British region.

- 1996: John Prager CM invited to speak to Vincentian family on Justice issues.
- 1997: Paper on theme of Bishops' pastoral: On the Common Good.
- 1997: New chairperson appointed to Justice Commission.
- 1998: (April) An input from the Irish Justice office. New Justice Commission appointed.
- 2000: Vincentian Millennium Partnership, Britain, established.

Appendix Four

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS IN THE LIGHT OF THE RANDOM SURVEY

- The organization does not operate as a precise and well-defined service provider. It is seen by candidate applicants as offering diverse products. However the "people" factor is strong and this has been a strong factor in the past in attracting new members.

- Regardless of why people choose the organization they are prepared to accept the variety of assignments offered to them.
- The works reflect dual policies of formation and direct service of the poor.
- There is ample opportunity for those who wish to find fulfilment in direct work for people in need.
- Community life is an attracting and sustaining force within the organization.

Appendix Five

Letter of John Henry Cardinal Newman referring to his connection with the community in Castleknock

Birmingham,

15th November, 1882

Very Rev. Father,

If any words of mine can aid in furthering the success of such excellent objects as I learn from your letter you have in view, gladly do I, according to your request, send you these.

I recollect well, how, when I became a Catholic, the first religious body which attracted my reverent(sic) notice was yours; and afterwards, when I was resident in Dublin, with what kindness, on presenting myself at your house in Castleknock, I was received by your Superior and Community.

I am pleased, then, at the opportunity, which after so many years you give me, of expressing my sympathy and interest in the Congregation of St. Vincent, and my sincere hope that your good work in England, as well as Ireland, may extend and prosper.

Very truly yours,
+John H. Card. Newman.

The Very Rev. Fr. O'Callaghan

(This letter, which is in the archives in Castleknock, was written to Malachy O'Callaghan and used on a printed leaflet issued in connection with an appeal for funds for the building of St Joseph's, Blackrock)

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FOOTNOTES

1. The Anglo-Irish region consists of personnel and houses of the organization in Ireland, North and South, and also in England and Scotland. In June 2011, it numbers fifty seven members, its numbers never exceeding two hundred at any one time in its history from 1833 to the present. Two of those are under fifty years of age. There are just eighteen under seventy years.
2. St Vincent de Paul founded the Congregation of the Mission in 1625 in France.
3. This thesis will examine, in chapter III, how the independent founders of the Irish organization adopted the rule of the international organization.
4. The 1986 Constitutions of the Organization states three purposes for the organization: first, the personal formation of members who would conform their lives to the founder of Christianity, secondly, that they would reach out to people who were poor and thirdly, that they would form other agents who would reach out in a similar fashion to those who were victims of poverty.
5. The time following Vatican Two which occurred from 1962 and 1965 called for *aggiornamento*, literally a bringing up to date.

6. It was called The Provincial Plan and emerged from a process of discernment lasting ten years, back to the Charism-making conference of 1981. The reflections of two members of the team who formulated the plans will later be presented in chapter four.
7. The Provincial plan of 1991 and amended version of 1992 will be reviewed as key policies. Reference will be made also to the documents of the Constitutions promulgated on January 25th 1985.
8. The founding of a small city-centre school as an income-generating project to support the general mission of the organization led to many other educational works being established over the next hundred years.
9. The organization founded by Vincent de Paul in 1625 is known variously as the Congregation of the Mission (CM). In France they are known as the Lazarists from the name of one of their central houses, St Lazare. In Ireland the founders called their organization Vincentians after the patron, Vincent de Paul
10. Basic Christian communities were known as *Comunidades de Base* in Spanish. Christians gathered in small groups in villages or Barrios as they were called and found a liberating voice in the Bible.
11. Gutierrez, G. 1984. *We Drink From Our Own Wells*. New York: Orbis. Here Gutierrez uses the image of a people who are enriched by drawing from the deep wells of their own experiences. Sobrino, Jon. 1986. "The 'Doctrinal Authority' of the People of God in Latin America" in *Concilium* No.168. Here he speaks of the marginalized people as the new teaching authority in the church. It is for others to put it into doctrinal form.
12. The *Constitutions* of the Vincentian Congregation were approved and released for use by its members on the 27th of September, 1984.
13. Kouzes and Posner, 2007, in their seminal work, *The Leadership Challenge*, 4th Edition, Jossey-Bass speaks of the five qualities of leaders as 1. Leaders challenge the process; 2. Leaders inspire a shared vision; 3. Leaders encourage others to act; 4. Leaders model the way 5. Leaders challenge the heart.
14. Casey, M. 1995. *What Are We At?* Dublin. Columba Press. This was a phrase used by Michael Casey while working in the inner city of Dublin in the 1980s.
15. At the time of the Fronde, a war which devastated the areas of Picardy, Champagne and the Ile de France, the Lazarists and the Daughters under the guidance of Vincent worked with the victims of war. (Román CM, José María, *St Vincent de Paul: A Biography*, translated by Sr Joyce Howard DC (Melisende: London, 1995 P. 573). Two hundred years later the Irish Mercy Sisters went to Amiens where Vincent had once sent his workers, to study hospital nursing. (Ó hÓgartaigh, "Amiens, Brisbane and Crimea: Paul Cullen and the Mercy Mission that led to the establishment of the Mater Hospital in Dublin", in *Cardinal Paul Cullen*, Keogh, Dáire & McDonnell, Albert, eds., Four Courts Press, 2011)
16. Following a famous sermon in Folleville church (the pulpit is still there today) on January 25th 1617 Vincent was encouraged by Madame de Gondy to form a band of followers who would do outreach work among destitute country people. He later founded the Congregation of the Mission (CM) in 1625.
17. Vincent is attributed with having written 30,000 letters but the bulk of these were destroyed in the attacks on the house of the Congregation, St. Lazare during the night and early morning of July 13th 1789, the eve of the taking of the Bastille. (The house stored grain for the poor of Paris). Present in the house that night was a Fr Edward Ferris, an Irish-born Vincentian and first Dean of Maynooth. The early founders of the Irish Vincentians were given his Common Rules of the Congregation by Archbishop Murray. The original French Vincentians were called Lazarists after the house name, St. Lazare, a former home for those suffering from Leprosy, now

known as Hanson's disease.

18. It occurred during the Franco-Spanish War (1635-1659) as Vincent gave an account of the relief efforts overseen by him, in 1657. (Román, 1999, 582., citing *Vincent De Paul, Correspondence, Conferences, Documents* New City Press, 1985, Volume V377-378.)
19. This was the first charity set up by Vincent to respond to the needs of families who fell into destitution. Today the Ladies of Charity (Association Internationale Caritate, A.I.C.) number 200,000 and have a seat at the United Nations.
20. We do not know the socio-economic bracket to which they belonged. Román (1999) described them simply as "pious women" (123). Later, their successors in the Ladies of Charity belonged to the upper classes in Paris. The original directions for the Ladies in Vincent's own hand are visible in Chatillon-Les-Dombes up to today.
21. Madame Goussault, first President of the Ladies of Charity wrote an extensive letter to Vincent, (*Vincent De Paul, Correspondence, Conferences, Documents, of St. Vincent de Paul*, New City Press, 1985, letter 135). The letter gives an insight into the people of rank whom this man, of peasant origins, could engage. She spoke of not wearing a farthingale, a hoop in her dress, which was part of noble dress! She also refused to have her portrait painted in the parish in which she worked and then regretted it! Finally, she said that having spoken in the parish church the local Curé said he wished he could have her remain to work in the parish.
22. His political ambition for France led eventually to the Thirty Years War of 1618-1648.
23. Mary Purcell writing of the Duchesse d'Aguillon quotes from Abelly who wrote the life of Vincent, in 1664, four years after Vincent's death, says: "She who a short time ago was supported by her uncle in such luxury that he would not allow her to put foot to ground lest it touch the mud of Paris, may now be seen traversing the streets." (Purcell, 1963, 131)
24. Román quoting from a letter of Vincent in Vol. XIII of Vincent's letters, 833;
25. It will be of significance that while the original organization had one founder, Vincent de Paul, who shared his vision with others, the Irish organization was comprised of a number of founders, all with competing and conflicting visions of what the organization ought to be.
26. The letters are Vincent's own words. He either wrote or dictated them to one of his two secretaries, one of whom was from his own district, Brother Bertrand Ducournau. Pierre Coste published twelve volumes of Vincent's writings in twelve volumes. Eight of these were letters and four were conferences which he gave to his own members and the Daughters of Charity. The conferences in most instances are what his listeners recorded or transcribed from his notes.
27. *The Common Rules*, having been lived since the founding of the organization in 1625, were written two years before Vincent's death in 1658.
28. Purcell, M. 1963. *The World of Monsieur Vincent*. London: The Harvill Press Ltd. Note also, Davitt, T., *Vincent de Paul: What to know and Read about Him*. www.famvin.org. Here he recommends Purcell as having written best English version biography on Vincent de Paul.
29. Arbuckle, G.A., 1986. *Strategies for Growth in Religious Life*. New York: Alba House. O'Donnell CM, H. His words from a personal diary at the Vincentian Convocation of 1986 will be employed in the text. Maloney CM, RP, 2008. *Seeds of Hope: Stories of Systemic Change*. St Louis: Society of St Vincent de Paul.
30. References will be given to these concepts in later chapters.
31. Maloney, RP, 1998. *Seasons in Spirituality, Reflections on Vincentian Spirituality in Today's World*. New York: New City Press.
32. McNamara, T, 1867. "The Origins of the Congregation in Ireland" Provincial

- Archives. See also, *Colloque, Journal of the Irish Province of the Congregation of the Mission*, 1987, vol 7. 27-45.
33. Ibid. p.44 in *Colloque*, vol 7. A Reverend Mr O'Toole CM, who worked in Paris paid what McNamara called "a casual visit" to St Vincent's College. Later he spoke of the community to the Superior General of the CM in Paris who readily adopted the new foundation into the world-wide organization.
 34. McNamara writes: "Besides being a period of labour, these years were also a period of anxious suspense as to the prospect of ever realizing the ultimate object the associates had in view." (p.43) He does not name the "ultimate object" but one can presume from the context that it was not the work presently engaged in at the time, namely that of education.
 35. Provincial Plan, 1992, 2.
 36. McNamara and Dowley will be re-introduced in chapter three.
 37. In in-depth interviews with the architects of the *Provincial Plan*: both stated that it was neither owned nor managed.
 38. *The Common Rules*, as they are called, were published in 1658 have remained unchanged since 1658 but the *Constitutions*, which are the foundational principles of the organization, have been updated continuously.
 39. Richard McCullen in a recorded interview in St Paul's, Raheny. He was the first Irish leader of the international organization since the time of Vincent de Paul.
 40. Much of the material in this chapter comes from the work of James H Murphy, in *Nos Autem; Castleknock and its Contribution*, Gill and McMillan (No date given). The full motto is: *Nos Autem in Nomine Domini* (Psalm 20, verse 7: The complete stanza is: "Some trust in chariots or horses, but we, however, in the name of the Lord.")
 41. A number of seminarians in the National Seminary of Maynooth college (founded in 1795, by royal decree, as a means of combatting the liberal and nationalistic doctrines which students for the priesthood were imbibing in French seminaries, in particular) decided to form a community with their Dean to do outreach work especially among people who were poor and soon to be emancipated from religious intolerance. The Catholic Relief Bill was given royal assent on 13th April 1829.
 42. Vincent de Paul was aware of Religious persecution in the time of Cromwell (1649-1654) and sent Irish-born members to Ireland during those years, one of whom, Thady Lee was murdered. There was no other connection with Ireland after these years until Edward Ferris (1758-1809) came to Maynooth as its first Dean from 1801-1809. However, the founders of the new organization would not have known him personally.
 43. We do not have a contemporary history of their founding – it was not written until thirty years later. Note: McNamara, T, 1867. "The Origins of the Congregation in Ireland", Dublin: Provincial Archives.
 44. The early accounts suggest that it was always the intention of the founding group to establish an Irish branch of the Congregation. However it was at the prompting of a man called Toole in 1838 that Dowley and another founding member, Kickham, a relative of Charles Kickham (author) went to Paris on March 18th 1839. (Murphy, nd, 19)
 45. Edward Ferris (1739-1809), a Kerry man, ex-soldier in the French army joined the Congregation and was assistant general when St Lazare was looted on the evening of 13th July 1789, the day before the fall of the Bastille (Murphy, 19-20)
 46. Between 1651 and 1683 there were Lazarists (Vincentians) in Ireland and in the Islands and Highlands of Scotland. They suffered greatly, and one Thady Lee, suffered martyrdom, at the hands of Cromwellian forces. These men were single minded in their missions to the most abandoned in life- threatening situations.

(Purcell, 1973p.18-27)

47. See previous note on Maynooth College, founded in 1795, as a means of circumventing the Nationalistic ideas associated with seminarians educated on the Continent.
48. The young men were James Lynch, Peter Kenrick, Anthony Reynolds and Michael Burke who from 1832 onwards wished to establish the organization (Kenrick was to be the leader but the day before opening a little school as a means of support he declared he was leaving the group – “clearly a career move” (Murphy JH, *Nos Autem* 5). They also invited their Dean, Philip Dowley (born Waterford 1788) to join them. Later, Lynch invited Thomas McNamara, who came from a wealthy milling family in Meath, to form part of the group. John McCann, a former medical student and another friend of Lynch was closely associated with the group but never became a formal member. Instead he was their principal financier in early foundation days.
49. The Council of Trent (1545-1563) engaged in the process of Catholic Reformation.
50. Their first school was in Usher’s Quay in Dublin. They only stayed there two years as the location and work demands took a serious toll on their health.
51. Dáire Keogh & Albert McDonnell, *Cardinal Paul Cullen and his world*: Editors, Four Courts Press, 2011. refer to this mission in Athy in 1842 and how at least a dozen other religious organizations were later involved in similar-type parish missions conducting at least two missions and sometimes three or four in each of the 2,000 Irish parishes by 1880. See also Murphy (30 & 37).
52. From the beginning there was a division in the group: McNamara and Burke favoured missions and Lynch and McCann favoured Education. Dowley also favoured education.
53. John McCann (see note 5) financed the purchase of a country house at Castleknock.
54. Since the Reformation from the 16th to the 19th centuries, during the time of Cromwell and the later Penal Laws, Ireland sought emancipation, which only came with the Román Catholic Relief Act in 1829
55. Carlson, ., Stockholm, Stromberg (1951) *Executive Behaviour, A study of the Workload and the Working Methods of Managing Directors*, uses a metaphor for leadership of the puppet with hundreds pulling the strings.(1951, 52). The bishops, in making calls on the founding leaders in the Anglo Irish region were representing a large population deprived of education, leadership and formation in new teaching of the Council of Trent (1545-1563).
56. Davitt, T, “James Lynch (1807-1896)” in *Colloque*, Vol 34, 1996, 288.
57. Here Murphy cites Patrick Corish, *The Irish Catholic Experience*, 202
58. Murphy (citing P MacSuibhne, *Paul Cullen* II, 171.
59. Doherty, Gillian M. & O’Riordan, T available at www.multitext.ucc.ie
60. Here Murphy (47) cites the report of the leader, Thomas Morrissey, 5-5-1904.
61. This motto is taken from psalm 20:7: *Some trust in chariots and horses, but we however in the name of the Lord.*
62. *Assembly of the Irish Province 1861*, in *Colloque*, 1981, vol. 4. Dublin: Provincial House.
63. This report was given to the community on the 26-9-1966. There is a copy in the Provincial and Castleknock college archives of same. (It is also in Murphy, 134)
64. A former Provincial team leader (In-depth interview, July 15th) recalled James Cahalan speaking of the “how” personnel are in educational works. Today, that voice is being heard and acted upon, especially, in an effort to inculcate the Vincentian ethos in the second-level schools.
65. The council referred to here is the Provincial Council, the leadership team of the Anglo-Irish region
66. This is a reference to the number of personnel in the Organization which now

- numbers 57, only two of whom are under 50 and eighteen under seventy. Since the numbers have diminished many valuable works have had to be entrusted to the care of others. (Note again, Appendix One)
67. The present Vincentian Mission team under a lay leader, is called the *Ember Team*.
 68. Castleknock College is now a day school as is St Pauls each with a Lay Principal. Presently the lay- staff , in conjunction with the Vincentians and a past pupil, are involved with a project called: Developing the Vincentian Ethos (DOVE). They send teachers and students to Ethiopia with the Vincentian Lay Missionaries annually. Many of its past students are now members of the Vincentians and working in Africa, in Eastern Europe and in China. The Teacher Training Colleges are no longer administered by the Vincentians but All Hallows has continually adapted to give access to people who wish to return to education to qualify and serve their communities at home and abroad.
 69. Sweeney, J. 1994. *The New Religious Order, A study of the Passionists in Britain and Ireland, 1945- 1990 and the Option for the Poor*. London: Bellew Publishing. Sweeney was referred to in chapter one but in this section his work of analysis of his own religious congregation will be examined.
 70. Guy, M. & Hurley, J.,1990.*Change and Development in Religious Congregations*. Religious Life Review, Vol. 29, 87-94. Guy has worked extensively with religious as a facilitator at their assemblies.
 71. Fries, A., 1995.*Transformative Leadership –Key to Viability*.A Talk given to a joint Conference of Major Superiors of Men and the Leadership of Women Religious, CMSM/LCWR, in the U.S;
 72. O'Donnell's words are recorded by the author in his diary for the Vincentian Convocation of 1989.
 73. O'Donnell speaking at the Vincentian Convocation in 1989;
 74. The Passionist community (CP)
 75. Fogarty, M.,Ryan, L., & Lee, J., 1984. *Irish Values and Attitudes (Subtitled: The Irish Report of the European Value System)*.
 76. *OctogesimaAdventiens*, 1971. (Translated by the Grail, London as: *This is Action*), Rome. Pope Paul VI celebrating the publication of Leo XIII's, *Rerum Novarum* (Of New Things), 1891. Paul VI was calling for people to go beyond words to action on behalf of justice in the world.
 77. O'Brien, N., 1985. *Seeds of Injustice*. Dublin: O'Brien Press. (He speaks of how one has to grasp the barbed wire of injustice and the Dove of Peace will inevitably alight on your hand.) 1987. *Revolution from the Heart*. Oxford University Press. O'Brien influenced many of the religious congregations in Ireland in June 1984 when they were part of a circle of protest around the city at O'Brien's unlawful detention on false charges on the island of Negros in the Philippines.
 78. Drucker,P.,1980 *Managing in Turbulent Times*. London: Pan Books, p.43.The idea of keeping the enterprise lean was a concept taken up at the Marino Assembly of the Congregation in 1995. It was simply called "creating slack".
 79. Beckhard, R., 1980. *Organizational Development:Strategies and Models*.
 80. Lonergan, B.,1985. *A Third Collection* (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press) as cited in Maloney, R. 1998: *Seasons in Spirituality*. New York: New City Press p.144-145)
 81. The Constitutions and Statues of the Congregation of the Mission, 1984, Rome; English Translation, 1989, Philadelphia.
 82. Cahalan, J., 1991. The Perennial Challenge of Vincent. Justice Talk, All Hallows. (Unpublished)
 83. This report was submitted to the Provincial of the time on 3rd January, 1979 by Stan Brindley, Aidan McGing, Michael Prior and Michael McCullagh. (Provincial Archives, St.Paul's, Raheny and in the possession of the author)

84. Provincial's letter to the Province, February 22nd, 1978.
85. Note the Constitutions of the Congregation of the Mission, Rome 1984. English translation, Philadelphia 1989. These constitutions took seventeen years of work and three General Assemblies, 1974, 1980 and 1986. In the introduction the members of the organization were encouraged to have the texts "imprinted" on their hearts and lived out in their vocation to preach the gospel to the poor." They gave expression to the rules of Vincent de Paul called simply, The Common Rules.
86. *Constitutions* 1984, pps.105-107
87. *Constitutions* 1984, pps.105-107
88. *Constitutions* 1984, par.1
89. *Constitutions*, Part Two, no. 12.
90. The final plan of 1992 will be used in this thesis. The section referred to here from the 1991 plan resembled the 1992 plan and they differ in the introduction only in terms of semantics.
91. These were St Patrick's College of Education, Dublin; All Hallows College, Dublin; St Mary's College of Education, London and the fourth was Damascus House, a retreat centre with a young adult formation group in place.
92. AVEC (French: "With") A programme in collaborative community work run from the Tavistock Centre in London.
93. This refers to the training of priests and all pastoral workers. The former was one of the goals of Vincent de Paul.
94. The Convocation at Clongowes in 1989. It issued three goals.
 1. An outreach to the abandoned;
 2. Community for mission.
 3. Formation of members.
95. Hellwig, Monika, *Whose Experience Counts*, Milwaukee: Marquette University, 1982. This was the 1982 P re Marquette lecture. In it she emphasises that people who are poor are the privileged interpreters of life and of the gospel.
96. Pope John Paul II, to the General Assembly of the Organization '86.
97. The pastoral care of the Travelling People was entrusted to the Vincentians in 1980 and the mission to the Deaf has existed since the time of Thomas McNamara, one of the Irish founders.
98. The youngest member of the organization became a formal acting member of the organization in 1991. It has been over twenty years up until now (2011) since anyone has joined the organization.
99. *Common Rules*, VIII, no.2.
100. Lencioni, Patrick, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Guide book for Managers, Leaders and Facilitators*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002. Two of the five dysfunctions, a fear of conflict and an unwillingness to hold one another accountable could be two reasons for complacency in regard to the implementation of the plan of 1992.
101. The only two surviving architects of the 1992 plan were interviewed.
102. Page 2, Provincial Plan, 1992.
103. Rafferty, K., 2009. *Fragments of a Life*. Dublin: The Columba Press.
104. These reflections are based on interviews with the architects of the plan. From further analysis and a member of the organization the author maintains that the plan needed a project manager who was free to coordinate all the efforts necessary to bring units to work in collaboration. In the plan the superiors of houses were designated as the executives for the plans. Few superiors had the management training to develop the new strategies.
105. Note recommendations in chapter five that policies be continued from one leadership team to the next.

106. In 1992 the organization still held key positions in four adult centres of formation, All Hallows, St Patrick's College of Education, St Mary's, Strawberry Hill and Damascus House retreat centre. By the year 2,000 only All Hallows was administered by the Organization. In the plan it was intended that these four would collaborate on projects of formation for adults and young adults.
 107. Note the Adult Learning Bachelor of Arts course (ALBA) which is a Degree for personal and professional development. Credits are given for existing skills, knowledge or experience.
 108. Since 2008 upwards of twenty five teachers and forty pupils have gone overseas with the Vincentian Lay Missionary immersion programme (VLM) to Ethiopia.
- cxi. McCullen, R., Letter of Feb.22nd 1978 setting up a commission to "examine steps necessary to ensure community involvement with the poor, with a view to securing a radical re-orientation in this direction." It followed the General Assembly of January 1978 which had as its starting point the wording of the vow: "the evangelization of mankind (sic) especially the poor."

The New Evangelisation and the Vincent de Paul Society

this talk was given at the annual general meeting of the Scottish St Vincent de Paul Society, which was held in Murryfield Stadium, Edinburgh, Saturday Oct. 20th 2012.

Pat Collins CM

Dear brothers and sisters of the St Vincent de Paul Society, I want to begin with some significant words which were written by Blessed John Paul II. In par. 3 of *Mission of the Redeemer*, he said, “I sense that the moment has come to commit all of the Church’s energies to a new evangelisation”. Notice that the Holy Father said that the Church should devote not some, but *all* of its energies to the new evangelisation. When John Paul spoke about new evangelisation he did not mean that the Christian message was new, but rather that the culture in which it has to be proclaimed has changed in many respects. For instance, in Europe, which is so secularized, millions of nominal Christians have little or no contact with the Church, are largely ignorant of its teachings, and live as if God does not exist. So the gospel message has to be shared with them in ways that are new in ardour, methods and forms of expression.

In par 3 of *Mission of the Redeemer*, John Paul II went on to say, “No believer in Christ, no institution of the Church can avoid this supreme duty: to proclaim Christ to all peoples.” That means that, not only the Vincent de Paul Society, but each and every one of its members have a duty to engage in the new evangelisation. In this talk I want to suggest some possible ways in which the members can do this.

Only those who have been truly evangelised can evangelise effectively
There is a Latin saying, *nemo dat quod non habet* which means “you cannot give what you haven’t got.” You and I can only evangelize effectively if we have first been truly evangelized ourselves. I know this from personal experience. I spent eight years of study in the seminary. So when I was ordained I knew a lot about the person of Jesus but I didn’t really know him in person. In retrospect I can see. that like many other cultural Catholics, I was a deist rather than a true Christian. I believed in the distant, abstract God of the philosophers but I did not have a personal relationship with the divine Son of God. However, when I was 29 I had a powerful religious experience which enabled the truth about Jesus to fall the vital 18 inches from my head to my heart. I knew my sins were forgiven and I had the power to comprehend the length and

breadth, the height and depth of the love of Christ which surpassed the limited measure of my understanding so that I was filled with a sense of his presence within me.

As Pope Paul VI rightly said, “the person who has been evangelised goes on to evangelise others.” Then he added, “Here lies the test of truth, the touchstone of evangelisation: it is unthinkable that a person should accept the Word and give himself to the kingdom without becoming a person who bears witness to it and proclaims it in his turn” (Par. 24 of *Evangelisation in the Modern World*). The members of the Society of St Vincent de Paul should imitate Christ’s way of evangelising the poor by means of witness and proclamation.

Evangelisation as Witness

A) Table Fellowship

In Our Lord’s day the poor were given to believe that they were under a curse because they neither knew nor kept the law. This was in line with O.T. teaching. In Deut 27:26 we read, “Cursed is the man who does not uphold the words of this law by carrying them out.” In John 7:49 the Pharisees echoed that point of view when they said of the people that Jesus ministered to, “this mob that knows nothing of the law-there is a curse on them.” Jesus had come to announce the coming of God’s kingdom, the cancellation of the debt of sin and the free, unmerited gift of God’s merciful love. So instead of saying they were under a curse, Jesus conveyed to disreputable people of his day, such as tax collectors and public sinners that they were blessed. He did this by dining with them which was a sign of acceptance and respect. As theologian Albert Nolan has observed in *Jesus Before Christianity*, “Because Jesus was looked upon as a man of God and a prophet, they [the outcasts and sinners] would have interpreted his gesture of friendship as God’s approval of them. They were now acceptable to God. Their sinfulness, ignorance, and uncleanness had been overlooked and were no longer being held against them.”

The members of the Vincent de Paul Society convey the attitude of Christ by means of their own non-judgmental acceptance of the poor, no matter how they have behaved. The members of the Society may hate their sins but they love the sinners, and convey that love by treating them with reverence, gentleness and compassion.

B) Deeds of Mercy

Jesus also helped the poor in practical ways, e.g. when he fed the five thousand in the wilderness. With this in mind St Vincent de Paul wrote, “Sentiments of love of God, of kindness, of good will, good as

these may be, are often suspect if they do not result in good deeds... We should be on our guard, for it is possible to be well mannered and filled with noble sentiments and yet stop there. When the need for action arises such people fall short. They may be consoled by their fervent imagination or content with the sweet sentiments they experience in prayer. They may speak like angels, but when it is a matter of working for God, of suffering, mortifying themselves, of teaching the poor, of seeking out the lost sheep, at rejoicing at deprivations, of comforting the sick or some other service here they draw the line. Their courage fails them." On another occasion he summarized his understanding of the connection between affective and effective compassion when he said: "In so far as it is possible, the hand should be conformed to the heart." The members of the Vincent de Paul Society are universally admired for the way they express their compassion in practical action. They know that compassion without material assistance is sentimentality, material assistance without compassion is condescension, but compassion expressed in material assistance is Emmanuel, God with us. Deeds of mercy are undoubtedly an integral aspect of the new evangelisation.

C] Action for justice

Jesus engaged in action for justice, e.g. when he critiqued the exploitation of the poor in the temple, overturned the tables of the money changers and chased away the animals that were on sale. No wonder a 1971 synod of bishops declared, "Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the gospel." When Pope John Paul II addressed the General Assembly of the Congregation of the Mission in 1986, he encouraged the Assembly to "search out more than ever, with boldness, humility and skill, the causes of poverty and encourage short and long term solutions; adaptable and effective concrete solutions." "By doing so," he continued, "you will work for the credibility of the Gospel and of the Church." The present day members of the Vincent de Paul Society imitate Christ not only when they associate with the poor and give them material assistance, but also when they seek to identify and rectify the systemic causes of their poverty and oppression.

Fr Werenfried van Straaten, the founder of *Aid to the Church in Need*, could have been talking about members of the Society when he said in a Pentecost homily, "The Gospel has been printed millions of times on paper. It is sold in all languages. But people, nowadays do not ask for a paper Gospel. They demand a living Gospel. They hunger for Christ who is the living Good News. They are waiting to meet men and women in whom Christ becomes visible again, in whom they can recognise and love Christ. They demand of us that we should give Christ a living form

again.” While witness of the kind already described is a vital aspect of the new evangelisation, it is not sufficient. Like Jesus, the members of the society need to look out for opportunities of proclaiming the gospel message to the poor.

The New Evangelisation as Proclamation

In Hebrews 11:6 we read, “without faith it is impossible to please God” and in Romans 10:17-18, we read, “faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.” Is it any wonder then that Pope Paul VI said on one occasion, “Even the finest witness will prove ineffective in the long run if it is not explained, justified and made explicit by clear and unequivocal proclamation of the Lord Jesus” (Par. 22 *Evangelisation in the Modern World*). In the remainder of this talk we will focus on one way in which the members of the Vincent de Paul Society can proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ.

Person-to-person evangelisation

Although he preached to crowds of people Jesus also engaged in person-to-person evangelisation e.g. with Nicodemus (Jn 3:1-5), Zacchaeus (Lk 19:1-5), Simon the Pharisee (Lk 7:35-47) and the woman at the well (Jn 4:4-42). In the latter account Jesus accepted the Samaritan without a hint of judgment or condemnation and used the topic of water as a metaphor for new life in the Spirit. In the New Testament Church the believers also engaged in person-to-person evangelisation. There is an interesting example of this in Acts 8:26-42. It recounts how Philip evangelised an Ethiopian official he met on a lonely desert road.

The contemporary Church continues to advocate one-to-one evangelisation. Pope Paul VI said, “Side by side with the collective proclamation of the gospel, the other form of evangelisation, the person-to-person one, remains valid and important” (Par. 46 *Evangelisation in the Modern World*). It can take many forms such as a parent talking to a child about Jesus; a man sharing his or her faith with a friend, or a member of the Vincent de Paul Society talking to a needy person he or she met in the course of their charity work.

1] Identify steppingstones to faith

Pope Paul VI once said, “one cannot deny the existence of real steppingstones to Christianity” (Par. 55 of *Evangelisation in the Modern World*). So, those who want to engage in person-to-person evangelisation need to look out for steppingstones to faith. Here are three contemporary examples.

1. Recently a conscientious Catholic woman called Anne did a nursing exam. When it was finished, she was talking to a colleague called Liz about how things had gone. Liz said that she had been tired because she had slept badly the previous night and was also very anxious throughout the exam. Then Anne said that she had slept well and was surprisingly calm. Liz asked how she had managed it. Anne explained that she had prayed to God for help and had trusted in divine help. As someone who had drifted away from the Church Liz was not only surprised, she was also interested and asked Anne to tell her more about relying on God.
2. Dave, a Catholic taxi driver revealed at a retreat for men that he tried to evangelise when he was driving around the city. He explained that often a passenger would sit beside him in the front seat. For the sake of conversation the passenger might ask Dave when he had come on duty. He would respond by saying, "I attended Mass in my local Church at 8.00 A.M. and came on duty afterwards." Often the passenger would be curious and go on to ask questions about his beliefs. This would give Dave an opportunity of sharing the Good News about Jesus and what he has done for us.
3. It should also be said that a believer can also raise meaning of life issues him or herself in a more direct way. For example, when a client who is being visited by a member of the Vincent de Paul Society talks about someone who has died, could be asked, "what exactly do you think happens after death?" That question can initiate a really good conversation about faith matters.

In these four instances person-to-person evangelization was made possible by identifying a stepping stone that could lead to a conversation about the Lord. When members of the Society are visiting their clients they can look out for steppingstones to faith.

2] *Personal testimony*

John Paul II once observed, "People today put more trust in... experience than in dogma" (Par. 42 of *Mission of the Redeemer*). That being so, it is important to avoid preaching or talking down to people. It is better to share one's personal faith story with others, by telling them what the Lord means to you and what he has done for you. As it says in Tobit 12:6-7: "Proclaim before all with due honour the deeds of God, and do not be slack in thanking him. A king's secret should be kept secret, but one must declare the works of God and give thanks with due honour" (Tob 12:11-12). It is advisable that members of the Society who wish to evangelise others should write down a brief account of their own conversion story. Ideally it should be structured as follows.

- A] What were you like before you developed a personal relationship with Jesus Christ?
- B] How did you come to relate to Jesus in a more intimate way and to experience the free gift of his saving mercy and love?
- C] How did your new found relationship with Jesus have a transforming effect on you? Whereas many of our contemporaries are resistant to dogmatic teaching of any kind, they do respect people's personal experience especially when it is shared in a sincere and humble way.

5] *Praying for others*

No matter how well or badly an encounter of any kind has gone, evangelisers from the Vincent de Paul Society can bring it to a conclusion by asking the person they were talking to, whether he or she would like a prayer for any intention. Experience teaches that even those who are sceptical about Christianity will often reveal a need. It might be a relative who is sick, a friend whose marriage is in difficulty, or some personal need such as a financial problem, a desire to get a job, to overcome an addiction etc. The disclosure of such a need is significant because it is an acknowledgement of a certain openness to the grace and power of God. The person who is evangelising can go on to ask, "would you mind if I said that prayer for you right now?" If they say no, then assure them that in the future you will pray *for* them and their intention. In my experience, however, the person being asked this question will usually say that it is O.K. to pray *with* them, in the present.

We encourage the person who is saying the prayer to use this little formula of words as a prelude to the prayer, "God is love. God loves you. Because he loves you he wants what is best for you. His love is the answer to your deepest need and the needs of the people you care about." The prayer follows. It is better to say it in the present rather than the future tense. For example if a woman has asked you to pray for her aunt Susan who is suffering from cancer you could say something like this, "Lord, Susan is ailing from cancer. I thank you that you love her and desire what is best for her. Confident that this is so I thank you that you are blessing her even as I pray by giving the gift of peace to her body, mind and soul. I commend her to your care knowing that your Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life is upon her now and will continue to be at work within her. Amen." Great things can and do happen as a result of such prayers even to the point of healings and miracles. As Jesus promised, "I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours" (Mk 11:24).

Conclusion

These are just a few of the ways that we can do one-to-one evangelisation. What the members of the Society in order to proclaim the message of the Gospel in a person-to-person way is conviction and courage. We have to overcome our fears, and like the first disciples have a spirit of boldness. In Acts 4:30 we read that they prayed, "Enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness." In Ephesians 6:19-20 we also read, "Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel... Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should." This talk ends with the last words we hear at Mass, "Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord."

From Peking to Dublin for the Eucharistic Congress, 1932

Michael Howard CM (1889-1966)

(This article is a reprint from a series which appeared in *The Vincentian*, the bulletin of St Vincent's Parish, Sheffield, in October and November 1932 and January and February 1933. Those who knew Michael will not be surprised to see that he sometimes coins new words in this article. T Davitt)

“Where are you going now?” asked an American gentleman friend in Tientsin, as I jogged along in my rickshaw, knees stuck up astride my two portmanteaux. “Going to Ireland”, I replied. Yes! Going from far-distant China to attend the Congress in Dublin. We were the farthest trekkers, except from Australia which is 12,000 miles away. We were the long-distance record breakers to attend the Irish Eucharistic Congress.

Let me begin at our leave taking from the little country parish in China where I had ministered for four years past to over 3,000 Catholics scattered about in sixteen different villages. My *remplaçant* was a young Irish Vincentian missionary, whom I was leaving alone in charge, and busy were those days of preparation and changing hands. Though we tried to keep the departure quiet, on the morning of leaving a crowd of about thirty men had assembled, and many willing hands loaded up our boxes on our mule cart. And many were the smiles and handshakes, and Wishes of a Peaceful Road, home to Ireland, from these honest folk. We padres were cycling, and our friends wheeled our bikes for us as far as we would allow them, protesting that they would come the whole way to the station, four miles distant, “Good-bye! Good-bye! See you again! See you again!” (in Chinese) was re-iterated many times on both sides, as we mounted, taking a last long look at our little village home. And then a parting word from my catechist, a real genuine friend, which brought my Irish heart right up to my throat: “tell your dear old mother I was asking for her” he shouted as we sped away. And on that first four miles of distant Chinese country, en route for Ireland, said I to my companion, the Reverend Michael C[rowley]: “Come on, Mike, this is the Rocky Road to Dublin, glory be to God!”. I arrived this same day, January 8, at Peking.

Peking to Tientsin

Our prospective steamer, from Shanghai to Marseilles, was due to leave on February 27, but we had other routes to discuss, whether I should

go via Japan and across America, or to Italy (Brindisi or Venice), and see Naples and Rome. This latter route was agreed upon, but the Italian steamer was leaving Shanghai on February 8. Now Shanghai is forty hours' express train journey from Peking, but with a war with Japan in full swing in that area several days might be necessary to get there, only to find our steamship already departed. And so, having spent my last half-day in Peking between Cook's and the Passport Office, with no time for good-bye biddings, but only for a last sortie for a souvenir hunt and a rushed re-packing of trunks, I made a very hurried exit, leaving on February 2 at 4.45 by express for Shanghai about 1,000 miles distant.

Reaching Tientsin at 8.30 p.m. there was a one hour's wait, during which time I received a real Irish send-off from two members of the Green Isle, in the persons of the Murrhys from Clare. (P.S.: Jack Murrhy, a distinguished member of the Chinese Maritime Customs Service, has wonderful stories to tell, and will probably send you one for *The Vincentian*, when I can press him to do so on seeing him again, when I return next year, D.V.).

Leaving our waiting train then by rickshaw I got to Murrhy's hotel, and so warm and kindly was that atmosphere that I almost felt like letting that waiting train go away without me. They bedewed me with "joyful draughts"; we sang together Irish songs, "The Girl from the County Clare", etc. They insisted with presenting me with a port-manteau, which they tried to fill with apples, champagne, etc.; they embraced me like a parting son, and until that train left Tientsin station, and the broad kindly Irish face of Jack Murrhy faded from my view, I felt that this was the "last glimpse of Erin" on Chinese soil.

Tientsin to Nanking

A strange phenomenon occurred, or seemed to occur, to that train on leaving Tientsin station. It was 9.30 and very dark. The train first shunted backwards, but at what point, or how, again it passed through Tientsin station on its southward journey, I, nor my companion in the carriage, a Chinese gentleman, could never tell. Because, to assure myself, I questioned him, whether the train was shunting, and he was of the same feeling as myself, so that well on into the next day we felt that we were going backwards instead of forwards. I would therefore only conclude from this strange phenomenon that this was China, and that in China they usually do the same things that we do, but in the opposite way.

On that long train journey, for two days and two nights, some interesting incidents occurred. My only companion in the carriage, the Chinese gentleman mentioned, was quite friendly. He was a pagan, apparently a public official of some importance, for he had a soldier

with him as attendant and bodyguard. He introduced himself to me in the usual homely Chinese way, by offering me a cup of his tea. Then he asked me was I a missionary, a Catholic missionary, and said that he knew a large Catholic mission in his part of the country, and he praised the missionaries and the mission for the good work it was doing where he knew it. He gave me his address at Peking, saying he would like to meet me there again, and I returned the compliment, inviting him to call on my fellow-missioners in Peking on his return there. In the afternoon he invited me to lunch with him, but I politely excused myself, saying I only take a cup of tea at that time. Some half an hour after he had gone out to the dining car I went there to have my cup of tea but, on asking for my bill, I found to my surprise that this gentleman had already paid it for me. Such is the decent Chinaman's unassuming and sincere friendship even for a casual friend.

Our train was passing through varying landscapes, mostly vast flat rolling plains, crossed by some gently rounded mountains and shallow valleys. No roads, no electricity pole, no factory chimney stacks, no church spires; only the poor huts of the peasants grouped about the old pagan temples surrounded by their walled-in enclosures, and groves of century-old yews and ash trees, and everywhere the-varied sized little earth mounds of the family graves, scattered about in each little farm. At night we slept in our compartment, lulled with difficulty by the burr of heavy wheels.

Next morning, at 8 a.m., we crossed the Yellow River Bridge, a huge structure stretching nearly a mile in length and about eighty feet high. Shortly we arrived at a flourishing large town called Gee-an-Fu, with a neat little Catholic church near the railway, for here the German Capuchins have extensive prosperous missions, and this county of Shan-Dung is one of the most Catholic in China.

At noon and 1.30 p.m. we crossed again two other large rivers. At 6.15 p.m. we arrived in Lin-Tung, a great mining town. It was dark again, snow was falling, and the usual life, and sounds, shouts, running up and down of railway porters, the dignified stroll of Chinese policemen or braided-capped railway officials etc, of railway station life. At 9 p.m. my Chinese friend bid me good-bye, and I was sorry to lose his company after thirty hours of comradeship.

Morning again showed us a bleak country wrapped in a snowy mantle, and as we halted at little side ways, right in the fields, poor women and girls came on to the line holding out their large melon gourds for coppers, which fell into the snow, and as the train steamed away we saw them back in the distance still delving in the snow searching for the missing mites. And then I hearked forward in mind; how strange is travel, today looking at these poor Chinese peasants here

in their native fields, tomorrow looking at the Malay people and the Indians in their homes, and a few days after seeing the Italian and French peasants again in their home-haunts, and so on and on until we reach home at last.

But alas! We are not yet even at Nanking, the new seat of the Chinese National Government. And Shanghai, our terminus, is six hours' journey still, south of Nanking. From here our troubles commence. I learned that the English Consul from Peking was to travel on this train, to interview the Chinese government on the war situation. But the said government had fled from Nanking four days earlier, owing to the bombardment by Japanese warships stationed in the Youg-tse river, on which Nanking stands. Then our great Blue Express, Peking to Shanghai, began to go slower than a local goods train, stopping two hours here, etc. It transpired that a military magnate had commandeered the line. At many stations Chinese troops lay in cattle-trucks, miserably clad, exposed to the snowy atmosphere, shivering to death, eating their poor dry pancakes, ready for war but looking more like subjects for a hospital. And next, another Chinese gentleman became my companion de voyage. He was a dark intelligent looking man of about 45 years, of most attractive personality and gentle manner. He spoke perfect English, was educated in America as an engineer, and was now going to Nanking as 2nd engineer of this Peking-Pukow Railway. He told me of the bombardment of Nanking of four days earlier, and a few hours later, as we glided in there, we saw the ruins and debris of the same. And here I was marooned, on a cold snowy afternoon, with no train to go to Shanghai, no ships sailing there, with my boxes thrown on the platform, marooned indeed in a strange town, a river-port town and, at that, a terrible place and a dangerous place for a foreigner alone.

Nanking to Shanghai; through the war area!

Nanking, seat of the Chinese central government, is about 200 miles north of Shanghai, and situated on the great Yangtse river, the golden vein of the wealth of Chinese commerce, which carries from far away inland the produce of a vast territory. The Yangtse is navigable for 1,200 miles inland. At Nanking it is a mile wide, and large steam ferry-boats cross the river constantly, crammed with passengers and goods. The great Peking Blue Express Train for Shanghai, on which we travelled, ordinarily runs on to a huge ferry-raft and is transported bodily across the deep rough river to regain the main line again and continue southwards. But now, with Japanese warships blocking the passage, this was impossible. Anyhow, a Chinese coolie was my next means of transport. I well remember him, a lithe, strong fellow with tanned face, dark eyes, and tight-fitting felt cap. He unloaded my box and bags from the train

and, after a heated altercation with a platform tout who demanded money, which I hotly refused, he tied up my large portmanteau, a valise and a rug-roll together, attaching them to the end handle of my trunk, took them all on his shoulder and walked away as easy as a horse and cart to reach that ferry and cross to the south of the river where we should get a coasting steamer to bring us round to Shanghai by sea. But to cross that ferry with that luggage; what a jam! What pushing a scrooging of that mass of human beings, each loaded with bags and boxes, and rolls of clothes, and bedding, jammed like a herd of sheep, over the rushing water beneath! No order, no organization! “Here she comes!” The ferry launch, puffing and snorting!

Good Lord! There on board her again, another jammed mass of people with bundles, etc, just like our awaiting selves; a grand opposing scrum! Talk about Rugby internationals! Well, the moment she touched the landing stage, without awaiting for those to debark, on pushed itself our waiting throng, jumping with their bags on to the gunwale, grasping an overhead rope, being pushed backwards. I held close to my struggling coolie and landed on the deck, scrooged against the side of the boat, almost pushed overboard now and again; I held on stoutly. Hats went flying overboard as we steamed across the open river. Good-bye-ee! Never again for me, I hope! Thank God! But woe is me! My “second round” (of this scrimmage to get out of China) was the hardest, even harder than my third encounter, two days later, to finally clear Shanghai!

But that ferry (I forgot to tell you) was a free joyride for me. It happened this way. My hands were so full, watching my luggage and keeping on my feet, that I forgot to get my ticket. And so, debarking on the other side, as I confronted the Chinese constable on duty standing near the ticket collector, he looked at me and I looked at him (nuff sed!). I suppose my beard did it; he recognised me for a missionary, and therefore a public man and a benefactor to the country. So, with an important air, he motioned me forward, as I smiled a grateful thanks to him. (Decent man, John Chink!).

Here on the south river side I had a terrible passage. It was, literally, for me the first sector of my retreating battle. I lost a glove (token of my willingness to fight all comers), but escaped with my life, thank God! Here’s how it happened. I was besieged by hungry-looking rickshaw pullers. Touts and robbers attacked my flanks. My faithful porter coolie landed all my luggage and myself into two rickshaws, and off started the cavalcade, looking for the steamship offices and the steamer that could not sail because of the war trouble. But lo! My deliverer arrives. “Pardon me, sir” said I, “Can you direct me to the shipping offices?” It was a gentleman, a white man (European, I mean), walking along the

quayside. He looked pityingly at me, as I told him my tale of difficulty. "But there" he said, "There's a steamship office, that floating hulk there; better go down that gangway and enquire there". "But my luggage, sir?" I said. Well now, dear reader, it would take too long; indeed words could not describe to you the trouble, the waiting, the anxiety, the scuffling and arguments to get clear of Chinese porters etc -- terrible fellows -- until I finally found myself seated with my luggage safely in the Fourth Officer's cabin of a fine cargo ship, of a British company, bound for Shanghai. And then I said with a sigh of relief: "Thank God, I'm here, anyhow, and alive!" That European gentleman saved me on my return for my luggage afterwards from the exactions of those rickshaw-coolies who demanded over-fares. My glove had been stolen to extort money. I had to assume a threatening attitude, and by force unload my bags from those rickshaws. I had to pull and jostle rowdy fellows who were rushing the gates of that steamship office to try and board a ship to escape from the war zone.

I was the only passenger on our ship, and she was probably the only vessel leaving Nanking that could have landed me at Shanghai in time to catch the European liner. I had been cold, hungry and the victim of painful sciatica during all that hard day. I had had no food from the morning breakfast on the train. But the ship's officers received me very kindly as "Padre", a wandering brother as it were. And then I thought to myself: "Well, what a lucky dog you are!" or rather: "How good God is to me!" I felt strongly indeed how much He loves a poor far-wandering Chinese missioner! Yes! As a missioner in China I was well trained, exactly fit for this sort of tough knocking about, from my usual life in the mission field. And now, dear reader, (aside, in confidence) though it takes a tear now from a soft Irish heart to hark back in memory to those lonesome far-flung treks, still, like Danny Boy in the song it's "I'll be there" in next spring's sunshine. There, D.V., with the help of your prayers. For it's all for souls, immortal souls; and that's a missioner's life and joy, to battle through scenes like this!

Our ship's officers feared that we could not sail that day, owing to the presence of the Japanese warships. But at 6.20 p.m. precisely our engines began to purr, we pulled out into the river-roads, and steamed for Shanghai.

It was very dark and wintery, and after about half an hour's steaming suddenly the crack-crack of rifle fire sounded on our starboard. All lights were immediately extinguished, but the ship kept steaming ahead all in darkness. I hastily picked my way into the centre of the ship, between the cabins, and there an officer, in a subdued voice, told me we were passing one of the Chinese forts and that the soldiers amused themselves for practice by firing at passing ships. But our deck sides

were protected by large metal plates, covering any person's figure there.

Lights on again, ship's Chief Officer, First Mate, Purser, self and another formed a jovial family-party at dinner at 8.p.m., of first-class fare, beautifully served. Jokes, bets, wagers, as to what speed our ship could do, when would we make Shanghai, what lights and heads we were passing now, etc. All went smoothly into next day, passing Yangtse river steamers and cargo sister-ships of our Company, going upstream.

The Purser was a tall, venerable man of sixty years, a Scotchman with silvery grey hair, dressed in homespuns. We soon were fast friends, and he told me some thrilling tales. One was of an encounter with a party of young Chinese cadets who boarded his ship and demanded a passage, refusing to pay. Force had to be used to eject them. Then he unfolded to me a sad story of his own family history, of a life saddened by the sorrows of an unhappy marriage. He had been once master of a ship of his own, but now, old and broken, he still sailed those waters with a sorrowful heart. I braced him up, as best I could, to bear his cross bravely.

At about 4 p.m. I was sitting quietly in the saloon, when suddenly the Chief Mate rushed into the room and, snatching his binoculars, said quickly: "The Japs are bombing the forts ahead from the air". Running out on deck we saw in the distance great flashes of light, followed by clouds of dark smoke, and afterwards a fleet of bombing planes flew over the river. When we reached the spot we saw shell holes and ruined buildings along the river front. For here are the forts of Woosung, which guard the mouths of the river leading to Shanghai city. And here, in the days following, the Chinese put up a stout resistance to the attacking Japanese. An hour later we sailed into the roads of Shanghai Harbour, at 5.30 p.m.

A wonderful, spacious, busy port is Shanghai. Ships of all nations crowded the quays. Large naval vessels, British, Italian, French, American, lay at anchor there. Chinese junks, windjammers, tug-boats of all sizes, steaming and shrieking, rushed up, down and across the river, churning up waves to rough choppiness. We passed our steamship, the *Gange*, lying quietly at anchor, waiting to bear us home to Italy and Ireland. Further down, a large American transport, filled with troops, had just arrived from Manila, for duty in Shanghai during the war now on there.

Our vessel safely anchored, a river launch came alongside and took us to shore on the Bund of Shanghai. This is a fine modern city in the foreign quarter, with a wide asphalt road, busy with motor traffic. Tall buildings, with high towers, flank the quayside; hotels, shipping offices, banks, luxurious buildings. Here our party separated, each one was engulfed in that flow of city life. It was a city suffering from war fever.

Bombing-planes encircled overhead by day, and at midnight Japanese guns were heard shelling the crowded quarters of the Chinese city. And from there, thousands of Chinese refugees came flying distraught from their poor homes, seeking the shelter of the foreign quarters. The city police were mobilised, and foreign men were all out on war duty with the Volunteer Force.

Next day, Saturday, offices closing at noon, rushed by taxi to Cook's Offices to book passage to Europe; and hurriedly by steam launch transferred our luggage from the Nanking steamer to the mail liner, the *S.S. Gange*, bound for Brindisi and Venice.

Spending Sunday with the Rev J MacD, a Canadian Jesuit Father, rector of the Catholic Club, we visited the Great Observatory of Siccawei, with its extensive buildings for the seminary, schools and bishop's residence, of the Jesuit Fathers.

And finally, on the crowded quayside, embarking for our steamer, Sunday evening at 4.30, we were wished "God speed" by an Irishman from Swords, Co. Dublin, a much-esteemed superintendent of the Shanghai Police Force, whose homely accent and talk to [of?] Mattie H and Jack C at home made me feel I was there already and say to him, as we warmly clasped hands in farewell, "Yes! I'll be there in a few days, please God, there to see your friends in the grassy fields of Swords, Ireland, where was my father's home!"

Shanghai to Hong Kong

It is with difficulty that I bring myself to write to you a last contribution of our journey home to Ireland. But it will help your Christmas number, I hope. The sea journey from Shanghai to Brindisi by fast Italian Mail Steamer, a distance of 8,626 miles, takes 24 days' steaming, with stops at six ports en route, making delays of about five days, so that our average speed was 430 miles per day, over 20 miles per hour.

Our good ship the *Gange* has finished the day as a first class speeder. She is of 12,600 tonnage and ranks in size yet, high up amongst the second largest class of steamers. On Monday, 8th February at 8 a.m. she quietly shook off her moorings and, like a great monster of the deep, began to move. Slowly, slowly, creeping down the harbour roads, ships, quays, buildings and the coastline began to recede as she gathered speed. On deck, people were all astir, viewing the passing sights, beginning to chat together, opening fresh acquaintanceships. One jolly Norwegian sea captain waved his cap, shouting farewell to his shipmates there on his good ship, which he was leaving at Shanghai. For two miles along, out in the offing, we passed a line of Japanese cruisers and warships, anchored at given distances. And then into the China South Sea, rain, clouded skies and a strong swell at sea. We carried many wealthy-

looking Chinese young men and ladies, apparently getting away from the war danger. They mostly debarked at Hong Kong, where we arrived on the 10th at 8 a.m., having travelled 800 miles.

Before being allowed ashore all passengers must present themselves for medical examination, which simply consists in the doctor looking sharply at your face and character, in ordinary cases. Then, a most imposing levy of police, so labelled on their peaked caps, inspect your passport and stamp it with their seal "Permission to land". Then the gangway is lowered and the waiting tenders are soon crowded with landing globe-trotters. Here, while waiting with my companion, an Italian Franciscan missionary from China, and having spoken a word to the examining doctor, he kindly invited us to come ashore in his launch. He spoke to me of Castleknock College, Dublin, saying he was a past pupil of that college. Ashore we soon found the *Procure* of the Milan Missionary Fathers, who received us kindly, gave us lunch and changed our Shanghai dollars into Hong Kong dollars. Staying with these Fathers I found the chaplain of the British, one Fr O'Brien, Irish of course. With him I spent a pleasant day visiting the Irish Jesuit Fathers' Hostel, Ricci Hall. There, from Fr Dan McDonald and Fr Byrne, late of Gardiner St church, Dublin, we received a homely welcome. Coming through the town we met Rev. Giles, chaplain of the British Fleet, who gave us a warm handshake. Boarding the ferry again, with fresh supplies of cigarettes and "lemonade" (?) for the voyage, we regained the *Gange*, tea'd on board and, at 6 p.m. weighed anchor for Singapore, 1,440 miles distant. "Good-bye, Fr O'Brien!"

Hong Kong, or Victoria Island, is a British colony. Built on a rocky hill it is a real, natural scenic theatre, as it were. At night-time the houses with their balconies and shady-arched entrances, nestling in tree-sheltered alcoves, with lights glimmering here and there, make an entrancing picture. Stars glisten in a soft blue sky, in the warm southern air. Look down at the lights of the town below you and, further out, the dark sheen of the waters, on which ride large steamers with their rows of lighted-eyed portholes, and above them the irregular line of their top-lights, and the red and green of their head-lights, bobbing gently up and down to the movement of the sea. Listen to that music, ringing out on the balmy air, in this lovely setting: "Yes, we have no bananas!" Yes! 'twas in such a scene on such a night that I stayed at Hong Kong on the outward voyage. The harbour itself is too beautiful to try to paint in words.

Hong Kong to Singapore

It was Ash Wednesday evening, 10 February, and we were sailing nearly due south. Next day by noon we had covered 331 miles, the sea was lovely, the weather getting warmer. We put back our watches three

quarters of an hour. Friday the 12th, very hot today; playing deck quoits; swimming bath fixed up on board; lovely morning, sailing calmly by the south coast of Indo-China with the Philippine Islands 350 miles away on our left. At noon, a big swell in the China Sea. Made 457 miles today, nearing the coast of Borneo. Nice sailing. Cinema on top deck in the evening. Italian orchestra at 5.30 p.m. daily in the saloon.

Sunday the 14th, St Valentine's Day, Mass at 5 a.m. on board. Arrive Singapore 9 a.m. No medical or passport exam going ashore. Visited cathedral, in charge of the Milan Missionary Fathers. Met Fr Valour, who received us warmly, extricating us from a hard monetary battle with our rickshaw coolies, and their Pullman (= man-pulled!) cars. Met three Irish nuns, Sisters Walsh from Cork, all three cousins of each other, in the Convent of St Maur. Spent the day in St Joseph's Institute, de la Salle Brothers, with Reverend Brother Stephen Buckley, of Mallow, as superior, who gave us a royal homely welcome. This is a beautiful crescent shaped building, with large arched-in balconies for protection from the tropical sun, with accommodation for 1,500 scholars. It was with legitimate pride of race that we saw an Irishman preside over the members of seven different nationalities, joined together amicably in one religious body.

Singapore is only twenty miles away from the equator, has a spacious natural harbour, and splendid roads built, as at Hong Kong, by British enterprise. Groups of Chinese dwellings are seen in parts, and comical little thatched huts, built on wooden piles by the Malay natives, peep out of the fringe of the wooded groves of palms, coconuts and bamboo, which line the roads. In the gardens monkeys come down from the trees to take oranges from children's hands.

Singapore to Colombo and Bombay

We left Singapore, not without taking on a cargo of elephants – souvenirs carved in black wood, I mean. The ship's crew bought a large supply of canaries, and little monkeys cost a few shillings each. We left Singapore at 12.30 noon, under a blazing tropical sun, *v-e-r-y* hot, I should say. Up the Straits of Malacca, with Sumatra visible on our left, and across the Bay of Bengal for the port of Colombo in Ceylon, only 1,574 miles distant. 'Twas lovely sailing, on a sunny sea like molten lead. Three days later, on Thursday 18 February at 8 p.m., we sighted the coast lights of Ceylon, and next morning at 5 a.m. we anchored in Colombo harbour.

At Colombo we did not stay long. Some passengers amused themselves by fishing from the deck of the liner; others went ashore in barques, rowing, or by steam launch. We remained gazing at the array of natives, grouped around our mammoth ship in their small barques and

junks, displaying their souvenirs and saying “Very cheap, lady! Very nice! Only five rupees!” Then they put their carved ivory boxes, or black elephants into nose-bags, and slinging us a rope attached thereto, made us haul them up aboard for inspection. “No, too dear!” was the usual reply. They had large quantities of small bananas and pineapples.

We set sail again at noon to coast round to Bombay, 890 miles away. The hills and mountains of India seemed quite near to us. Many fishing smacks were round about. At night the full moon, which before was following direct behind us, was now slantwise on our starboard quarter. We were in Bombay harbour at noon, Saturday, and spent an excellently enjoyable weekend in that charming Indian city.

Two Indian gentlemen on board, travelling back from Shanghai to Bombay, spoke English fluently. They were large cotton exporters at Shanghai and were bewailing the Japanese war at Shanghai and the danger to their cotton stores there. They gave me the Irish news about President de Valera and the Annuities question, with evident interest and satisfaction. Knowing Bombay well, they also directed us to St Xavier’s College of the Jesuit Fathers, saying it was well known to everybody, at a place called Dobitah Lao.

There we received a kindly welcome from the Fathers who, though speaking English, were mostly Spanish. In fact, eight other Spanish Jesuit priests had arrived the previous day, banished from their homeland. St Xavier’s High School has a roll of 1,600 pupils, and the University adjoining, managed by the same Fathers, has a roll of 1,800 men and women students. Here, an American Jesuit, Fr MacGowan, took me in hand, making me feel quite at home.

That Sunday evening, rambling alone in Bombay through the native quarter, down to Queen’s Road, awaiting a bus for Malabar Hill, I spied a little yellow-coloured building, zinc roofed, with the familiar cross on the gable point. I went straight in, and there how friendly, familiar and homely everything was to me. It was a little Catholic church, and groups of boys and girls around their teachers were learning their catechism in a subdued voice. Men and women, young and old, were coming in and going out, kneeling there praying, and I knelt and prayed amongst them. I, just one white stranger passing through their native land. I looked at many of them, and they did not mind or notice me. It was all so simple and homely, just the same as I had seen so often in my little church in China on Sunday evenings, and the same as in France and Ireland. Here, then, I was convinced of the wonderful Greatness, Equality, Universality and peace-loving influence of the One, Holy, Catholic Church.

*At the end of this instalment were the words “To be continued”,
but no further instalments appeared.*

Darwin Revisited

In memory of Father Vincent O'Brien, CM, who first alerted me to the problem

Aidan McGing CM

Charles Darwin (1809-1882) was one of the greatest naturalists of all time. His intimate knowledge of nature made him ask how a benevolent Creator could have made such a cruel world where parasites exist and animals eat each other. His faith was further undermined by the painful death of his favourite daughter, Annie, in 1851. He solved his religious problems by denying that a Creator had any influence on living beings.

While Darwin's agnosticism absolved God from the charge of cruelty, it left Darwin with a second problem: without an Orderer, how can we explain the order in nature? As he put it:

From the first dawn of life, all organic beings are found to resemble each other in descending degrees, so that they can be classed in groups under groups. (1)

The Book of Genesis explained the order and complexity of nature by stating that God created animals "each in its own kind", a claim which Darwin repeatedly rejected. Instead, he proposed a completely new explanation.

He proposed that living creatures are all descended from a presumed original living cell or cells and that they branched out subsequently into different species, whether plant or animal. He assumed that the order among living things arose from this common descent from an original cell or cells. (2) On the other hand, he believed the variety in living creatures arose from what he called natural selection or the struggle for existence, where... the strongest live and the weakest die." (3) The whole process he described as *descent with modification*.

According to the theory of natural selection, members within each living species vary from each other in that some are stronger and some swifter, etc. These random variations favour some creatures in the struggle for existence so that they have a better chance than others of surviving and reproducing themselves. Over millions of years, the survivors change so much that they become a new species; hence the title of his great work, *The Origin of Species*.

The real question is whether Natural Selection, which "is blind... because it does not see ahead, does not plan consequences, has no

purpose in view" (4) could really have produced more than eight million different and interlocking living species.

Microevolution and Macroevolution

Here we have to distinguish between microevolution and macroevolution (the distinction is not Darwin's.) *Microevolution* refers to the changes that take place *within* a species. Sometimes the variations within a species results from human intervention that modifies the breed, as we see for instance in different breeds of dogs. Sometimes nature alone will bring variation, as with the famous Galapagos finches whose beaks altered according to the food available. Nearly everybody accepts Darwin's idea of natural selection at the level of microevolution, or change *within* the species.

Macroevoltition on the other hand involves a change in which one species supposedly turns into another, and here the problem begins, because nobody has ever seen one species change into another. In fact, humans have been breeding species for thousands of years without ever producing a completely new species. Biologists have performed endless experiments on the unfortunate fruit-fly in an effort produce a new species, but in vain.

We also know that the further away we breed from the original plant or animal, the more likely it is to become sickly and sterile, as if nature wishes to conserve the species within limits. much less allowing it to become a separate species.

Evidence against Darwinian Evolution

Darwin's reliance on Chance invalidates his Theory

Since the advent of the electronic microscope and computer assisted mathematics, we are beginning to understand better the stupendous complexity of even the simplest cell. Cells are so small that it is estimated that ten thousand average cells could fit on the head of a pin, yet in order to function and replicate itself an average single cell holds as much information as all the volumes of Encyclopedia Britannica put together. Can this information really have come by chance or even by natural selection, as Darwin proposes?

Indeed, what chance can accomplish is very limited. If I continued to deal hands of cards in the hope of delivering by chance four hands each with thirteen cards of the same suit, I would certainly wait a long time. But if I use my intelligence, I can arrange the four hands in a minute or so. Such is the difference between chance and intelligence. To claim that what intelligence can do, chance can also do, given enough time, is unconvincing.

As we know, proteins within the cell are formed from amino acids. The mathematician William Dembski (5) has estimated that "...the probability of getting a protein [by accident] with 100 amino acids is exactly one in 20^{100} , an unimaginable number. Yet amino acids are all the time coming together to form proteins in the cell.

No wonder the atheist Fred Hoyle remarked that the cell is so complex that to imagine it emerging by chance is the equivalent of claiming that a tornado sweeping through a junkyard might assemble a Boeing 747 from the materials therein.

If Darwin had known all that we now know about the complexity of living creatures, it is doubtful whether he would ever have proposed his system. The argument from the improbability of chance is so compelling that in a sense it makes further arguments against Darwinism unnecessary. No matter how many learned societies and prestigious scientists support Darwinism, the argument from improbability shows it to be impossible.

In no other branch of science would scientists dare to appeal to such improbabilities in order to support a mere speculation.

Darwinism rests on a false analogy.

The whole argument for evolution depends on a false analogy or a quibble about the two meanings of the word "evolution". As we have seen, there are two types of evolution: microevolution and macroevolution.(6) Microevolution refers to the changes or evolution that takes place *within* a living species.

Microevolution is an observed fact, while macroevolution, which claims that one species or one phylum can change into another as dinosaurs are supposed to have turned into birds, is hypothetical and has never been observed. While Darwin gives many examples of microevolution (7) he can only theorize about macroevolution. (8)

As usual, he has a ready explanation, declaring that just as humans can create new breeds of plants or animals for their purpose so, by analogy, he sees no limit to the changes that nature can produce by natural selection. (9) This is unsupported speculation and not a scientific argument. Darwin himself admits that analogy "...may be a deceitful guide." (10) In fact, weak analogy is one of the classic logical fallacies.

In this case, the analogy between intelligent and natural causes fails completely. A competent typist using intelligence could type out the words of Hamlet in a matter of days. If I sat down and banged away at random on a mythical word processor, according to one calculation it would take me a hundred thousand times the age of the universe to type out the same text. To claim that random causality is more effective than intelligent causality rests on a false analogy and is patently absurd.

Missing Links

Darwin imagines species changing gradually under the influence of random variation and natural selection, until they become a new species. But such a scenario would require millions of transitional species (missing links) between the first species and its end successor, which the fossil record does not show. Darwin himself confessed that the missing link was a strong argument against his theory, but he hoped that future search would find it. In fact the opposite has happened: intense searching has confirmed that no genuinely transitional links have occurred.

The Argument against Gradualism

Over and over again, Darwin insists that evolution is a slow and gradual process as one species turns into another. After eliminating a Creator, he feared that to admit sudden changes in living beings might be construed as bringing back a miraculous Creator.

In fact, however, new living species on planet earth have not emerged gradually and by continual small changes as Darwin thought, but by leaps or, in the technical jargon, by *saltations*.

It is now – widely agreed that the earth is about 5.5 billion years old, and that life in the form of cells without a nucleus appeared about 3.4 billion years ago, followed by nucleated cells about 2.6 billion years ago. The second group of cells does not seem to have evolved in any way from the earlier group, but came on the scene suddenly by saltation.

From 2.6 billion years ago until about 530,000 years ago there was a succession of primitive animals, mostly unrelated to each other. But suddenly, during a period roughly lasting from 530,000 years ago to 525,000 years ago, the Cambrian Revolution occurred, which produced nearly all the life forms we know today. This has been described as the biological Big Bang, and it happened comparatively suddenly, contradicting Darwin's theory of gradualism.

This is not a mere debating point: Darwin's system depends intrinsically on gradual change in which one species merges into another, yet this is not what the fossil record shows. The different categories of animals that emerged at the Cambrian Explosion did not merge into each other as Darwin imagined, but appeared almost suddenly and were discontinuous from each other.

So there are three saltations or leaps in the appearance of life, firstly non-nucleated cells, then nucleated cells, and finally the Cambrian Explosion. These phenomena contradict Darwin's idea of slow development. As he himself admitted:

If it could be demonstrated that an complex organ existed, which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications, my theory would break down. (11)

The Phylum

Here we note the existence of the phylum (plural *phyla*), which is a biological class above species. So, for instance, the phylum vertebrates (12) includes such diverse categories as birds, fish and mammals, all of which share the same basic body plan, namely a backbone attached to a central nervous system. At the time of the Cambrian Revolution new phyla emerged not connected with each other. Within each phylum new species evolved mysteriously by a process we do not understand but certainly not by blind Darwinian evolution.

This phenomenon again runs completely counter to Darwin's theory, according to which species would change gradually and give rise to new phyla. In fact, the opposite happened: new and unconnected phyla arose which gave rise to new species.

Finally, it is accepted today that the earth endured great catastrophes in the past, whether by flooding or earthquake or by the impact of large meteorites, which wiped out very many species. This fact further contradicts Darwin's gradualism. Catastrophes also undermine the idea of natural selection since even the mightiest of the dinosaurs were wiped out along with the weakest.

Darwinism and the Origin of Life

Darwin famously remarked how life might have originated: "But if... we could conceive in some warm little pond with all sorts of ammonia and phosphoric salts, light, heat, electricity present that a protein was formed ready to undergo still more complex changes..."(13) He was being perfectly logical since his whole system demanded a beginning; but how could the process get under way without a Creator?

The first living cell was already unbelievably complex. To begin with, the membrane surrounding a cell may have as many as four hundred openings to allow chemicals in and out. The same membrane, which marks the cell off from its surroundings and protects the intricate machinery within, must be manufactured by the cell itself yet the cell could not function without the surrounding membrane. Neither could function without the other, so we have a chicken and egg situation.

The cell shows at least ten such mutually dependent processes within it before it even begins to function. The chance that such a cell could begin by accident has been calculated at 10¹⁶⁸ to 1, another unimaginable figure.

Since Darwin has rejected an intelligent Creator, he must say that these extraordinary improbabilities about the origin of life can be explained by chance or by physical laws. Evolutionary scientists have performed experiments which produced some of the chemicals necessary for life but they, are using intelligence in the process, while according to Darwinian evolution, life began by accident.

Arguments in favour of Evolution

Evolutionists appeal to two facts in their favour. First, if groups belonging to the same animal species are separated from each other, for instance if they live on different islands, the species inhabiting one island may begin to change in appearance and may not interbreed with those on other islands. Evolutionists claim that we see here the beginning of a new species.

This is incorrect. Even if their beaks or feathers change, finches remain finches and do not turn into eagles or sparrows. Different breeds of dogs look unlike each other but they remain dogs and further the fact that they do not always wish to interbreed does not mean that they cannot interbreed.

Secondly, in defense of evolution it has been shown that chronologically later species sometimes inherit features from an earlier species which it is claimed, proves that they have descended from the earlier species by the [blind] process of natural selection. The classic example given is the primitive bird, *Archaeopteryx*, which appeared about 150 mya (million years ago.) This bird, which came about 150 million year after reptiles. inherited several reptile features, including a long bony tail, and teeth in upper and lower jaws, neither feature being found in modern birds. Evolutionists claim that this implies that *Archaeopteryx* descended by natural selection from reptiles and hence is an example of evolution in action.

I will make just two points. First, we are not denying all evolution but only Darwinian evolution which, remember, is supposed to work purely by chance. Secondly, while it is true that at the first appearance of a new species, nature sometimes incorporates features from an earlier species, that does not necessitate Darwinian evolution.

Consider, for example, that aircraft wings, although they have been designed over a period of a hundred years by intelligent engineers, latterly helped by wind tunnels and computer assisted mathematics, are notably inferior aerodynamically to birds' wings. If the inferior aircraft wing required intelligence for its production, it makes little sense to suggest that the far superior wing of *Archaeopteryx* could emerge by

the brute force of natural selection and chance without a guiding intelligence.

Hopefully, future research will discover why nature, when introducing a new species sometimes uses features from previous species.

If Darwinism is so improbable, why has it remained so influential?

Darwinism appeals because we have no alternative explanation for the complexity of the living world. Nature baffles us. In the circumstances, evolutionists often say that even if Darwinism is not convincing, it is all we have, so we should accept it. But that is a counsel of despair. Science has always advanced by questioning theories which new knowledge has shown to be increasingly untenable, as in the case of Darwinism.

Furthermore, palaeontologists (14) and biologists who have staked their reputation on Darwinism are slow to admit that the new evidence, especially from cell biology, makes the theory impossible. Reputations, careers, promotion, jobs, research grants are all at stake and only a brave scientist will blow the whistle.

Modern evolutionists are in the same position as the sixteenth-century scientists who were terrified to abandon publicly the Ptolemaic astronomy which held that the sun goes round the earth. Copernicus (probably a Catholic priest) who finally discredited the Ptolemaic system was so terrified of public opinion that he delayed publishing his findings until shortly before his death. Modern evolutionists can be equally afraid of upsetting their public too.

By refusing to face its own difficulties, Darwinism has become a form of scientific fundamentalism (Fundamentalism is popularly understood as a rigid adherence to indefensible doctrines). This explains the ferocity with which many evolutionists defend and propagate the theory, in spite of its improbability.

Evolutionists have much to be insecure about. *The (American) Journal of Molecular Biology* which professes to be interested in the evolution of the cell has not produced a single article between 1971 and 1996 that offers to explain how Darwinian evolution could have produced the cell.

American biology textbooks profess to do their biology according to Darwinian principles (as Stalin decreed that Soviet biology should proceed from the discredited theories of Lysenko) yet a trawl through these textbooks from 1970 to 1992 finds that out of 14,500 entries in their indexes, only 138 referred to Evolution. (15)

There has never been a meeting or a book, or a paper on details of the evolution of complex biochemical [cell] systems. (16)

The human impact of Darwinism

Evolution is ultimately about the place of God and man in the universe: does God exist or are we mere cosmic accidents? As a result, the emotions surrounding Darwinism are usually more existential than scientific. Nor can the theory explain the quantum leap between blind nature and intelligence.

Darwinism also confirmed in their criminality the greatest scoundrels of the twentieth century, Hitler, Goebbels, Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky, Mao Zedong and Pol Pot, who all acknowledged their debt to him. (17) They were happy to be told that "...the strongest live and the weakest die."

Intelligent Design

When an archaeologist examines a site, he knows very quickly from the nature of the remains whether he is looking at the chance result of a landslide or an earthquake or whether intelligence has been at work. Similarly, since chance and natural laws cannot choose means for an end, when we learn that one part alone of the human brain contain 15 to 33 billion coordinated nerve cells, then, since neither chance nor blind natural forces can explain this extraordinary fact, we should conclude that intelligence has designed it.

Hence the theory of Intelligent Design (ID) as the best explanation of the awesome complexity of living organisms. Only intelligence in the universe can explain life.

Intelligent Design does not claim that the universe was made by a Creator; that is a separate conclusion based on revelation. Nor does it abolish secondary causes. Nor is it a vacuous phrase explaining nothing: to say that the universe was designed is a piece of valid information which has deep implications for human self-understanding. But we are claiming that since blind evolution cannot explain the universe's complexities, intelligent design is demanded: a fact which moves us on from the materialistic diagnosis that movement and matter explain everything.

To quote Fred Hoyle again. "It is clear to me that some giant intellect has been monkeying with our universe." Our earth, against all the odds, is so tightly attuned for human life that some scientists hold that life could not appear anywhere in the universe except on earth. Yet all this fine tuning has happened without breaking any of the physical laws that we know of. Perhaps God has equally manipulated the potentiality of the universe to create life, with the proviso that human life so far transcends lesser life that the human soul must be directly formed by God.

Intelligent Design may be the first step in releasing man scientists from the materialistic bunkers they have built for themselves. Far from

rejecting science, it is an appeal to the latest research from science itself. Showing up Darwinism for what it is may be the first step in undermining contemporary materialism.

FOOTNOTES

1. Charles Darwin *The Origin of Species*, Wordsworth Edition, Ware, England, hereafter *Origin*, 510.
2. *Origin*, 64, 252 and passim.
3. *Origin*, 64, 66, 186.
4. Richard Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker*; London 1991, 21 .
5. William Dembski, *Intelligent Design*, Illinois 1999, 270.
6. Microevolution is sometimes referred to as special evolution, while macroevolution is known as general evolution.
7. *Origin*. See especially chapters one to five.
8. In chapter five of *Origin*, where Darwin deals with variations, not one of the variations he mentions crosses the species boundary; in all the variations, not one species becomes another species.
9. *Origin*, 62-66.
10. *Origin*, 25.
11. *Origin*, 146.
12. Technically vertebrates constitute a subphylum, but for our purpose here it is legitimate to call it a phylum.
13. Letter from Darwin to Joseph Hooker, quoted in Anthony Latham, *The Naked Emperor*, London, 2007, 14
14. A palaeontologist is a fossil expert.
15. Michael J. Belie, *Darwin's Black Box*, New York. 2006. 165-186.
16. Belie, *ibid*, 179.
17. A trawl through Google under the rubrics Darwin Lenin. Darwin Stalin etc. will show the truth of this statement

Liber Scriptus Proferetur:

Fr Eugene Sweeney's 90th birthday celebration

11th January 2001

*Permission to use this was given to me by Fr Sweeney himself;
I am grateful to Jim McCormack,
author of the work, for providing the text (ed.)*

This is one of Eugene's most quoted texts – It's from the *Dies Irae* of the Requiem Mass.

On the Day of Reckoning, the Recording Angel demands
that the Book be produced
in which all the Soul's deeds and mis-deeds have been recorded.

It's a day he is not looking forward to – with good reason. Those of us who know Fr Eugene well, can scarcely have doubted that such a moment as this would come – a moment that sees him poised on his metaphorical funeral pyre, listening attentively to his own obituary; ready to offer clarifications and, of course, corrections, and generally have the last word – nothing could be more in character.

As you may know, some time ago, I was fingered by the corpse to pronounce the panegyric at his obsequies. For all sorts of reasons, I didn't think it was a great idea.

For one thing, I didn't rate my chances of outliving him, as any better than 50-50; nor was I enamoured of his reason for commissioning me, namely, that I could be relied upon to "Dish the dirt on him".

I suppose it's rather typical of his masochistic spirituality, that he wanted dirt to be dished – it's equally typical of his exceptional curiosity that he would like to hear what was being dished.

So his 90th birthday – what a marvellous achievement – provides both himself and the rest of us with such an opportunity for dishing a bit of dirt. It's too good a chance to miss.

Eugene – as the very name indicates – comes of course from noble lineage – The Sweeneys were the gentry of West Donegal – a wet weary land under water. The peasants held the Sweeneys in awe. Poets have sung about them – in both ancient and contemporary times.

To mention a couple of the more obvious, we have the early Medieval saga – "*Buile Shuibne*" – the Madness of Sweeney: Sweeney Unhinged – living in the tree-tops.

Coming to much more recent times, we have T.S. Eliot's, *Sweeney Agonistes*, [in which Sweeney takes Doris off to Cannibal Island – presumably for nibblies] and, of course, Eliot's other flighty work: *Sweeney Among the Nightingales* – titles which variously suggest, that the Sweeneys were for the birds.

I should say that the poetry has rubbed off, somewhat obliquely, on the hero of the hour – it's well-known that Eugene has a *grádh* for the great epics such as "The Peeler and the Goat", as well, of course, for the exploits of the small Curly One who features in the *Irish Independent*.

Quite simply, for Eugene, if it rhymes, it's poetry; if it doesn't, it isn't.

Meantime, back to our hero's education.

With respect, Fr Eugene, I don't think your early academic progress need detain us unduly.

Suffice to say it traced a classic route: starting from Johnny Doherty's hedge school in Burton Port, where, no doubt, you set the Master right on a few points.

It became clear, quite early on, that Eugene was going to be a bit of a handful. At the age of ten he nicked a car – possibly then the only car in West Donegal, and as to the manner born, drove it with aplomb to Dungloe and back – with several other juvenile delinquents, like himself, on board – mowing down the peasantry as he went – perhaps the first recorded instance of joy-riding, in Irish History.

It was obviously time to get him up to Dublin, for a bit of polish. In fact, there had been an earlier stab at this: his family – I suppose in desperation – had tried to deposit him in Mount Sackville Convent, for some rudimentary domestication. This prospect proved too much – for one of even his, biddable disposition.

So on the second trip to Dublin, the wretches in nearby Castleknock College, were approached, and agreed to take up the challenge – it was to prove a *commercium admirabile*.

Though it's so long ago that he doesn't actually remember the following, in Castleknock he would have been a luminary of what was known as the Bank Class – this was a rag-bag of the academically-challenged, who were more at home on the playing fields than in the classroom; and who were advised that, to secure their futures, it would be best, all things considered, if they were to marry a girl with a tractor.

As to his Baccalaureate studies at University College Dublin – suffice to say that these, perhaps, were not without some moments of modest attainment.

It was really in *Philosophy* and *Theology* that Eugene found his true *métier*. He bounded through philosophy and theology, with panache.

Of an Argumentative cast of mind, he evinced a particular aptitude for logic – evolving eventually, as we know to our cost, into a remorseless Logician – who, as we say in cricket, would have had Aristotle on the back foot.

And not just a Logician, but also a Phenomenologist – a flat-eyed realist: for Eugene, as for Wordsworth's hero,
 a primrose by a river's brim,
 a yellow primrose was to him,
 and it was nothing more.

As for his *Theological Studies*: such had been his early grasp of the Catechetical fundamentals – that any subsequent theological elaboration was reckoned to be otiose. Much of his considerable prowess in argumentation being to that effect.

In all of these forays, in the foothills of Academia, there were indications that intelligence was not entirely absent – though according to himself it was a close-run thing – as the Duke of Wellington said about the Battle of Waterloo – at which, it's rumoured, Eugene was mentioned in dispatches.

The fact is: Eugene didn't need intelligence: he was gifted, *ab initio*, with the useful accomplishments of, firstly, *total omniscience*, by which he knew everything – past, present and to come; and, secondly, he had the rather handy subsidiary gift of *infused infallibility* – indeed, we have all been the beneficiaries, day in day out, of his *ex cathedra* pronouncements.

All of which giftedness, proved to be an excellent foundation for a life of distinguished service and of rare accomplishment.

At some point in pre-history Eugene joined the Vincentians. Rather to his surprise, he won the favour of successive Vincentian Administrations: most notably as Bursar – variously at local community, collegiate, and, indeed, at Provincial level – all the while protesting that he knew nothing about economics – (of which there are several evidences).

But it was obvious that Eugene had a rare practical intelligence, and that he was full of common sense, and reliability; that he was a natural provider and fixer – a natural hands-on / “can-do” / “will-do” / “I've already been done it!” / operator.

Allied to all this, was the fact that he got on well with people – with students, and with staffs of all kinds – a popular man among those with whom he worked, and who worked for him – with a rare sense of humour; there was no side to him. A man who, almost in spite of himself, engendered affection.

Though never formerly appointed a Superior, he has, automatically, assumed the role of *de facto* Superior of any Community he has ever

been in – and on occasion speaks as with the authority of a Provincial – if not actually a Superior General.

To his amazement (understandable amazement) he became a Lecturer at 3rd level – in St Patrick’s College of Education, Drumcondra, and famously was in charge of discipline there – for six years – being known far and wide as “Dean Sweeney”.

On one occasion, the Principal of St Patrick’s was asked by a local barber if he belonged to “Dean Sweeney’s College”.

But it was on the other side of the Irish Sea, that the full flowering of the Sweeney genius came to pass. Here, in the elegiac purlieus of Strawberry Hill, the inherent Class of the man came to the surface, and shone like a beacon in the dark days of the 2nd World War.

Once again he was Dean of Discipline [this time for 15 years]; once again he was College and Community bursar; once again he lectured – in Divinity; it was in London that he calmly saw off the threat of Hitler’s rockets and doodle bugs; here, as Dean and Bursar, he nurtured his battered flock through the hungry, Spartan days following the War.

Then followed the Glory Days:

Concerts and operas in the Albert Hall, and Covent Garden; Holding his own against all comers – telling Lord Longford, and others of that ilk, to mind their manners.

Master of Ceremonies at all Pontifical Liturgical functions – including some at Westminster Cathedral dispatching Bishops and Monsignori – probably at random – from one corner of a sanctuary to another – Chauffeuring his elders and betters around London, and its environs; Eugene could be found at such places as Christie’s and Sothebys, the Fine Art auctioneers, where he was a regular purchaser – at Royal Ascot, and at several of the other Race Courses – at the Café Royale or the Ritz – again usually on chauffeuring duties: hob-nobbing with Royalty, as when bringing the Principal of Strawberry Hill to Buckingham Palace to be invested as a Commander of the British Empire – the rebel lad from Burton Port – the scourge of His Majesty’s militia – had come a long way.

In 1966, Eugene was transferred from Strawberry Hill to All Hallows College.

About his time here in All Hallows, I say nothing except to recall the words said of Sir Christopher Wren, *Si monumentum requiris, circumspice*. So too with Eugene – the evidences of his thirty-four years here are everywhere: One just has to look around.

Of his transition to All Hallows, I merely draw attention to the rather extraordinary manner in which he has survived in the post-Vatican II Church, and in the post Vatican II seminary and theological institute.

He has survived it all – through an approach laced with more than a hint of scepticism about gurus and their theories – and also because of a rather strange self-confidence, that somehow seems paradoxical – for as he would say himself: *nihil ex nihilo fit*.

So as we view Eugene on his 90th birthday, what are we left with?

To read about his early years, in his compelling autobiography, is to read about the history of Ireland at its most crucial juncture in modern times: as a youngster he would have met, in the family home, people such as Padraig Pearse, Eamon de Valera, Maud Gonne Mac Bride, and other prominent figures in National Politics; he would have experienced raids on his home by British soldiers and the Black and Tans; would have seen his father and other family members taken off to prison by the military; as an eleven year old, he came under direct rifle-fire from the anti-treaty forces.

Eugene, typically, took it all in his stride. No fuss. Carry on. Indeed, it's the matter-of-factness that continually catches the attention. The matter-of-factness, and the engagement with life; and the curiosity – about everything; and the continuing adaptability.

These are the qualities that carried him ever onwards. Recently I've begun to think that Eugene would have done well on the Chinese missions – for he's a quintessential mucker – in, full of practical skills – prepared to give anything a bash; frugal in his needs – he could have lived simply.

Adaptable. Humble as a hedgehog– Carrying little or no baggage from the past; and with his verbal skills, would have spoken Chinese like a native.

I also think of Eugene as a sort of *Renaissance* man – A man of Letters, author, raconteur, wit; dripping epigrams in Latin and Irish; with a finely – developed sense of style; an admirer of excellence – who likes things done properly; with a strong sense of decorum – of a need to observe the proprieties; a proven craftsman in precious metals, as well as in wood, paint and other materials; restorer of antiques; boat-builder; gardener; horticulturist, printer; all of these practised to a high degree of competence.

On my arrival here in All Hallows in 1977, I have a memory of hearing Kitty Fahy, the *maitresse d'*, remark: “Fr Sweeney can turn his hand to anything”.

And so I observed: Eugene the plumber, the electrician, telephone engineer, interior decorator, machine fixer and operator – and so much else; something of “a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles”, as Shakespeare puts it.

Latterly, he strides the Internet with the abandon of youth – Youth – Yes, there is indeed a sort of enduring youthfulness about him.

Not just *senex a puero* – which no doubt he was, but also *puer in senectute*.

Fit as a flea, – with all his own teeth; a hater of all affectation – of all *poseurs*; of those who fancy themselves – without a sentimental bone in his body: “State your case” – and you state it, in the knowledge that, almost certainly, you’re wrong.

Quick-fire Sweeney – doesn’t like hanging around; preferring the succinct to the verbose.

A basic image I have formed of Eugene comes from his rugby-playing days. It’s clear from his autobiography that he was an enthusiastic rugby player, and I imagine, a very good one. Knowing that he played rugby, I just knew that his position would have been that of scrum-half: Eugene had to be at the heart of the action – in control; at the base of the scrum, directing the traffic – calling the shots – shouting the odds; feeding it in, dishing it out – snapping at the heels of his forwards; kicking the shins of the opposition; dodgy work on the blind side of the scrum; giving lip to the ref; first in with the tackle; first into the loose maul; originator of loose mauls.

Eugene, the Primordial scrum-half.

At the same time – and in contrast – there’s a very different Eugene: there’s the man of duty and regularity; the man of exceptional personal discipline; always at his post; the man of religious observance – at his prayers in the morning – hours before the rest of us; at the heart of the community; at the service of others; always ready to answer the call.

That’s our Eugene:

“Dying, and behold we live.”

One of the All Hallows Immortals.

Vincentian Bursar of the Millenium.

One of the most unusual human beings

any of us will encounter in our life-time.

We shall never look upon his likes again.

We raise our glasses to him with the hope than when the Recording Angel reads out the accounts, Eugene’s worst fears will be confounded; and that he will be amazed at how much heaven will delight in his arrival.